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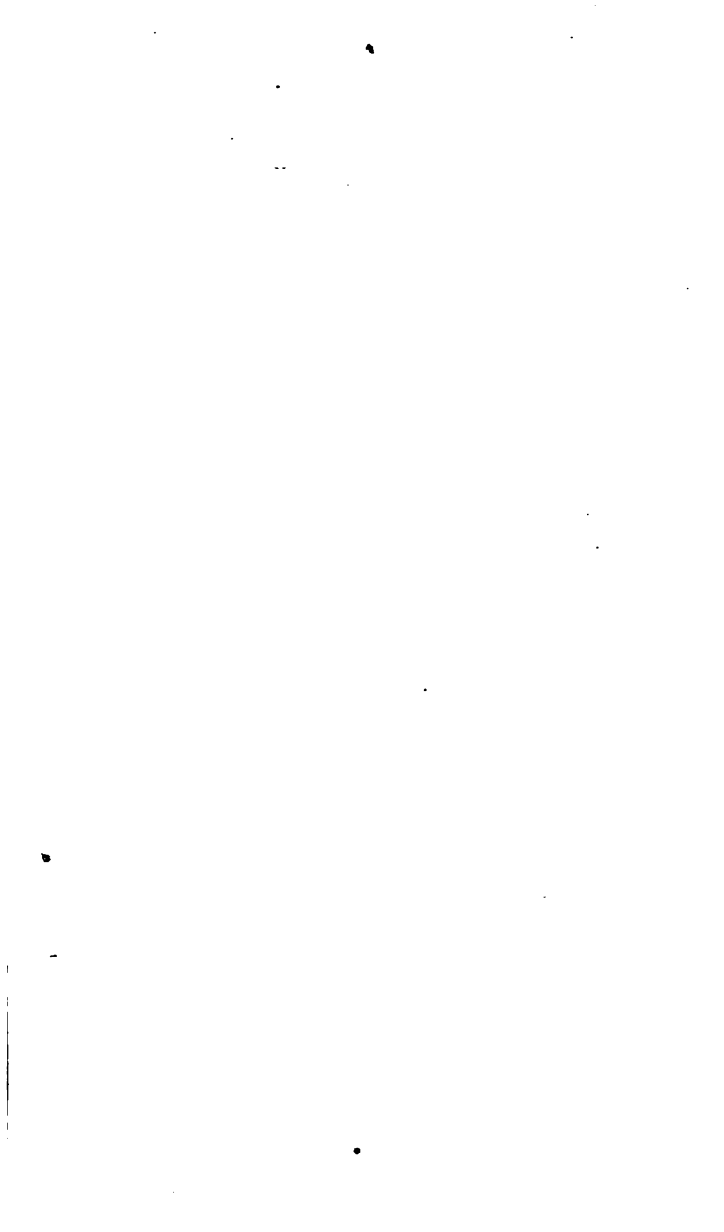
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THE PRIVATEER.



THE
PRIVATEER;

A TALE,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Some books are lies frae end to end,
And some great lies were never penn'd:
Ev'n ministers they hae been kenn'd,
In holy rapture,
A roasing whild, at times, to vend,
And naill't wi' scripture.
But this that I am gaun to tell,
Which lately on a night befel,
Is just as true's the dell's in h—ll,
Or Dublin city. —BURNS.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR JOHN ANDREWS,
167, NEW BOND-STREET.

MDCCCXXI.



LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,
Northumberland-court.

THE PRIVATEER.

CHAPTER I.

————— And thus it was with us
Like Summer Voyagers on a quiet sea,
We on the deck our varying parlance held;
Or gave the light jest to the passing winds;
Or on the sunnie billows carelesslie
Gazed as they kist and parted; or convald,
In gentle whispers to our Mistress' eare,
Fond thoughts that Fancie bred of Idlenesse;
While underneath the rapid tyde of tyme
Flowed brightelye on to miserable aims
And moste unhearde-of yssues.—*MORIBUNDE Old Poem.*

IT was in the beginning of August when, with a full tide and favouring breeze, a small northward-bound vessel dropped down the river Thames—the morning sun was sparkling on the rippled wave; and, as the many objects rose and expanded like imagination,

or passed and faded like forgetfulness, the passengers remained on deck, contemplating the land they left, till the waters widened, and the last needle-pointed spire melted into nothing.

There is something particularly interesting in the commencement of a first voyage—in the bustle and activity of the sailors—the fluttering of the canvass—and the fearful heaving of the element to which we commit ourselves; and this observation was fully verified in two of our party; an elderly female, and an interesting young one. As they sat watching a sailor in his progress to the mast-head, the first of these expressed great astonishment at his agility and seeming unconcern. “Suppose,” said she, “he should fall from that almost invisible rope! he would crush us to death!” “My dear Mrs. M’Kay,” replied the other, in a sweeter

and more feeling tone, "you seem to forget what would be the poor man's fate." She did not take her eyes off him till he had safely descended, and the next object which met them was a genteel young man gazing intently upon her. "Mind, Madam," he said, turning to Mrs. M'Kay, "keep clear of that rope, or you will be hoisted to the station just vacated by our friend with the ragged shirt."

The lady uttered an exclamation of horror and shifted her seat, but, being presently warned that the boom would carry her overboard, she retreated with all expedition to the cabin, while the gentleman took her place by Miss Grey, which was the name of the younger female. She thought his speech had been rather rude to her aunt, but some civil remarks and endeavours to make himself useful, soon placed him in a more ad-

vantageous light, and a few minutes found them chatting on the most friendly terms.

They had gone on in this manner for some time, when the gentleman calling to another who sat on the opposite side of the vessel in a musing posture, desired to know whence he had been favoured with the amatory composition which he had twisted into so many shapes. The person he addressed looked up and smiled, and, depositing the rumpled paper in his pocket, came towards them. As he advanced, Miss Grey's friend begged leave to introduce him, and, before he had received permission, announced him as Mr. Ardourly. Mr. Ardourly made his bow, and said he believed it would now be his part to perform the agreeable office for his friend which he had just received from him, and introduced him as "a rude and boisterous Captain of the sea—Captain Raleigh."

“What have you been saying to the little girl?” said Ardourly, as the young lady, rather embarrassed at being introduced by two strangers, readily obeyed a voice which summoned her below.

His friend laughed, and asked where her old grandfather had stowed himself. He had not been seen since they weighed anchor. Ardourly accounted for his absence, having seen him busily employed in putting away a cargo of curiosities; and was enabled to give something of his history which had been gathered from the Captain of the vessel.

Mr. M'Kay was a naturalist in his dotage. He had come from Scotland on a short visit to London, for the purpose of making additions to his collection of rarities. But the most valuable one he had picked up, by way of ornament to his fire-

side, was a wife, the good lady before introduced, who was now about to make her bridal entré at her new residence, and, having wisely considered the possibility of her making no addition to the family of the M'Kays, had stipulated with the bridegroom for the adoption of her niece.

These, with the two young men, of whom it is time to give a short account, were all the persons of importance now afloat in the "Pride of the Ocean," by which title the reader will please to recognise, not one of the fine smacks of the present day, but a small dingy cutter, about as clean and commodious as a collier.

Henry Ardourly was one of a large family, and, as this one happened not to be the eldest, his father had thought it as necessary to give him a good education, as to instruct his heir-apparent in the dignity of county

clubs and cock-fighting. Henry did not neglect his opportunities—he had good abilities, and what, in the opinion of his female acquaintance, was better, he had a good figure. These qualifications had, in a visit which he paid two years before to an early friend of his father in Scotland, found such favour with the honest Scot as produced an invitation for Henry to become his companion and successor; neither of which had been left him by his lately deceased wife.

A short time previous to his commencing his Scotch expedition his friend Raleigh returned from sea, and, like many other worthy sons of Neptune, having nothing to do but to bind up his wounds and spend his half-pay, wished for no better amusement than a few weeks' shooting on the muirs. Henry had full permission to take what friends he pleased, and they accordingly set out together.

As they were now alone, Ardourly produced the letter which had excited Raleigh's curiosity.

"Full of darts and smarts of course," said Raleigh, as he opened it—"you are nearer the mark than you suspect, perhaps; but read."

"If Mr. Ardourly values his safety, he will not venture on Scottish ground—he must have received a similar note to this some time since, and he would not have rendered another necessary, if he had been aware of the danger to which it exposed the writer."

"Very extraordinary indeed! can you form no clue to the meaning of this?"

"None."

"It is a very pretty hand—a woman's evidently. Why, what can it be but a half-witted plan of some enamoured fair, to keep you at home? Depend on it, it is the last

resource of desperation. But lo ! the Bridegroom appears !”

As soon as Mr. M'Kay had introduced his time-worn visage, and red worsted night-cap, above the cabin stairs, he was assisted by both the young men. His infirm and shrunk limbs could scarcely drag themselves to the deck ; and when he attained it and displayed his figure to full view, they could neither of them conceal a smile as they attached to it the idea of a bridegroom. His threadbare snuff-coloured coat but just hung upon the frame within it, and his black small-clothes and worsted stockings seemed, from their magnitude, and the negligence with which they were braced up, in imminent danger of falling about his heels. Having thanked the gentlemen with a voice which formed as strong a contrast to that of his wife, as did his meagre appearance and four-score years

to her tall, fat and jolly person, rendered tough by fifty-five years of celibacy, he desired them to examine the curiosity he had found. This was a miserable insect, whose minuteness had, unfortunately, been insufficient to protect it from the keen spectacles of the naturalist, and had been dragged from its hiding-place on the triumphant point of a pin.

“ Only look at him,” said Mr. M’Kay, displaying his victim, and gazing eagerly through a microscope; “ see how surprisingly he wags his legs! I’m thinking this will be the *pediculus marinus*—there, don’t touch him—look through the glass, and see how he opens his mouth—he is in his last gasps.”

“ Wonderful indeed!” said Raleigh; “ and where, my good Sir, might you have found him? in your wig?”

“ In Mrs. M’Kay’s wardrobe,” replied

the enraptured executioner, as he congratulated himself on the vengeance he had taken upon the intruding malefactor.—“ But how is our course? I ’m thinking we ’ll be some miles from the river just now. ”

Henry assented, and hoped he did not feel any ill effects from the water.—“ Ill effects! no, no—I have been over this ground too often; but there’s Mrs. M’Kay is not quite so well as she should be—but no matter, she is strong enough to bear it, and there is the child Aimlie to look to her.”

Raleigh no sooner heard that Mrs. M’Kay began to be sea-sick, than he thought it would afford him a good opportunity of renewing his flirtation with her niece; and, expressing much regret that such an amiable lady should suffer any inconvenience, presently disappeared to offer his assistance. Mr. M’Kay looked after him, and observed he was a wild

lad, and was only gone to make game of the poor body; but this, perhaps, did not discompose him so much as the rude and perilous examination to which his butterflies and tom-tits were subjected. Ardourly trusted he had met with no accident in shipping his treasures. The old gentleman replied in the negative, excepting the loss of a wing from the *tipula rivosæ*, or large gnat of Linnæus, which, indeed, might be said to be a species of the gaffer long-legs. "But," he added, "I am not quite at ease while that lad, may be, is rummaging the portfolio of botanical sketches."

"You have nothing to fear, my good sir, from his inspection, he has a great regard for the fine arts, and is no contemptible hand himself; witness that elegant performance before you"—and he pointed to a head chalked upon the deck.

“ Mrs. M’Kay to the life !” ejaculated the bridegroom with a grin of satisfaction, “ a promising sketch truly, but a little too like the queen upon a twelfth cake. I did not think he had the wit to be a caricaturist—he’ll have me by her side soon, I’m thinking—a jackanapes.” The latter part of this speech had something of petulance in it ; but Mr. M’Kay had, in some measure, outlived his wits, and was rather apt to be out of temper without very visible cause, at which times it required much penetration to find the real one ; in the present instance it might be the expectation of seeing his features displayed in caricature, or it might be the snapping off of a button, which happened as he was stooping to contemplate the physiognomy of his wife, and well nigh brought to pass the catastrophe which was always impending.

When this was adjusted, he entered into conversation again, and Ardourly perceived, through the frequent wanderings and imbecilities of age, the remains of a good understanding and dry humour, from which he hoped to extract more amusement than was promised by first appearances.

The ardour of Mr. M'Kay's present pursuit of the insect and feathered tribe had been preceded by not less eager studies of other descriptions which had succeeded each other in whimsical rotation as the progress of years more and more exposed his wavering mind to the dominion of fancy. Thus, after the chief part of a long life had been engrossed by painting, his first symptom of caprice was an attempt to cultivate the sister art, and to become a musician. He played on the spinet, and accompanied it with his voice; his harmonious avoca-

tions continuing the wonder of his friends and the torment of his household for a good twelvemonth; insomuch that he made a piano upon a new construction, and small enough to be his bed-fellow; so that he thrummed and practised his *sal-fas* whenever he waked. But being told that he would wear out his lungs; and having the mysteries of those delicate organs explained to him, the musician became curious, and was converted into a doctor; he fancied he had a thousand complaints, and took as many medicines with opposite effects. He visited his sick friends, not to inquire after their health but to taste their physie; and this led to a desire of the knowledge of making it, which, forthwith, turned him into a chemist. Having brushed up his dog Latin, and learned to decipher the hieroglyphics of a medical receipt, physicians, from

all quarters were desired to prescribe for imaginary diseases, the doses made up, and carefully preserved till occasion should call for them. But after a few fatal accidents, his fame began to decrease so much, that the want of encouragement turned his ideas from that branch of chemistry to the experimental one; and he passed his time in galvanizing frogs, and other scientific experiments, till he blew himself up, and decided upon another transition. Entomology was promoted to the vacant throne of Pharmacy and Voltaism; and, having, as yet, only met with the trifling inconvenience of running into a river in chase of a butterfly, his new occupation seemed, as the others had done in their day, the most delightful of all; especially, as it admitted the exercise of his pencil, which, through all the fluctuations of his taste, had

been more or less attended to ; perhaps, because it was the one for which he was best gifted by nature.

These particulars were voluntarily communicated by the old man, who took a pleasure in displaying his accomplishments but they could only be dragged at happy intervals from the dark chamber of his memory, in which he vainly groped for many other circumstances which might have been equally interesting.

“ You are a goodly sort of a stripling,” said Mr. M’Kay, “ but how comes it to pass that you have associated yourself with that noisy, senseless, sailor lad ? I have not spoke a dozen words to him, but he seems, bating a little good nature, which he cannot help, to be no more fit to be about a discreet young person than I was to be married ; though, God reward her, Mrs. M’Kay may

be as good as any body else, excepting here and there one. But the lad, I was speaking of the lad—you should keep clear of him, for he has a kind of hair-brained wit about him which amuses you whether you will or no, and might make you as bad as himself, saving that you have more sense and more reading.”

Ardourly endeavoured to say something in extenuation of his wild companion, but Raleigh had indulged his talent for ridicule too much at the expense of Mr. M'Kay and his treasures, to be speedily forgiven; he had likewise been over free in his remarks upon Scotland, of which he had a very imperfect knowledge, and had taken the liberty to curse barley broth, as only fit for the pigs, just after the touchy old gentleman had ordered it for dinner, and declared it to be the finest thing in the world.

This "finest thing in the world" which was "only fit for the pigs," was now delivered from the hands of the cook, whom 'twere base flattery to call a chimney-sweep, into those of the steward, by whom it was conveyed reeking to the cabin. The delicious odour of onions which it left behind put an instantaneous period to the conversation. Mr. M'Kay, having adjusted his night-cap and tightened up his small clothes, seized Henry by the arm, and made his way down as fast as he could; but not without observing a dish of cauliflower, and begging that his new ally would preserve all the *volvoca vel eruca*, otherwise caterpillars, that might fall to his share.

Mrs. M'Kay was not to be seen, while Raleigh and Miss Grey were, perhaps, eyeing the hapless mess with too much malice, for interrupting their *tête-à-tête*, to partake of it.

“ Why, Mrs. M’Kay, I say : where have you crept to ? The broth will be cold ! ” In reply to this summons, a voice issuing from something like a trap-door faintly exclaimed, “ I ’m very poorly ! ”

“ Well, but get up and take some broth ; ’twill do you good.”

“ Alack, I ’m very ill ! ”

After a little while the good lady turned out in her petticoat and stays, with a blanket over her shoulders, and a night-cap so beflapped and befrilled as gave the pitiful countenance within it the appearance of being decked out for a funeral. She was supported to the table, and having taken her seat, the bridegroom hastily splashed a ladle full of the “ best thing in the world,” into a pewter plate, and begged her to fall to. Mrs. M’Kay took up her spoon and laid it down again two or three times ; at last she

mustered resolution to convey a small quantity to her lips, but the wry face which it produced, seemed but too indicative of what would follow if she had the hardihood to proceed further; to Raleigh's delight, therefore, she was again helped through the trap-door, and desired to compose herself.

There was now no one to keep Mr. M'Kay in countenance but the Captain of the vessel, for Ardourly, Raleigh, and the young lady, preferred a biscuit with something less savoury, was produced from the locker, after many urgent representations from the latter of these gentlemen that Miss Grey, rather than be poisoned by his cursed hotch-potch, or whatever it was, would make up her mind to be starved. Mr. M'Kay raised his eyes in silent astonishment at the insult offered to the barley-broth and a fine haggis

which had been announced, but had not leisure to dispute the point with such a scape-grace.

CHAPTER II.

Bright was the prospect which before them shone ;
Gay danced the sun-beams o'er the trembling waves :
Who that the faithless ocean had not known,
Which now the strand in placid whispers laves,
Could e'er believe the rage with which it raves
When angry Boreas bids the storm arise,
And calls his wild winds from their wintry caves ?
Now soft Favonius breaths his gentlest sighs,
Auspicious omens wait, serenely smile the skies.—*Psyche.*

WHEN dinner was over, Raleigh hoped Mr. M'Kay had feasted to his satisfaction, and begged leave to drink a glass of grog with him. The old man shook his head and said, after he had wiped his mouth and taken out his tooth-pick, for which he had very little use, " I'd rather drink with you than eat with you, lad, for you are but a sorry judge of dainties, and, doubtless, you are better skilled in the first accomplishment."

“ True,” replied Raleigh, “ I learned that bad habit, and many others, when I was stationed off your Scotch coast; how else could a Christian stand your barbarous north-easters? Come, Laird, (for you are that at least,) here’s to our growing friendship, and success to your learned researches.”

Mr. M’Kay was fully as partial as Raleigh to his whiskey-toddy, though his head could not be expected to be quite so good, and they continued drinking together for some time in a kind of skirmishing sociability, disputing the rarity of a certain yellow flower which the one called a *Convallaria Bifolia*, and the other a Dandelion; till Mr. M’Kay shrugged up his shoulders and declared that sailors were the greatest reprobates in the world.

Miss Grey and Ardourly were quietly looking over a portfolio, marked “ *Papiliones, Culices pipientes,*” &c., and were, by

turns, amused with the conversation, and fearful of its ending in a downright quarrel; this, however, the Captain easily avoided, being one of those favoured few who are at liberty to say what they please without giving offence.

At last he finished the discussion by complaining that Mr. M'Kay so unmercifully brought together the terms of his different sciences that his arguments burst upon him like a bomb-shell, without his knowing what the overwhelming shower was composed of. Indeed, this complaint was just enough, for the whiskey had set afloat all Mr. M'Kay's various knowledge, which jostled itself from a comparison between the bills of the *tringa hypoleucos* and the *scolopax gallinago*, (which, for aught Raleigh knew, might mean crows and magpies,) to a discourse upon *digitalis* and *hydrargyrum*, *sopranos*,

falsettos, perspective and neutral tints; all of which were as cleverly mixed together as if they had been pounded with a pestle and mortar.

“ I must now talk a little to your niece, Laird,” said Raleigh, “ for the mind needs relaxation after such learned exertions.”

“ Pray, Miss Grey, do you not think you will be very miserable in Scotland, after the character I have given of it.” The young lady laughed, and inquired why he went thither himself if he disliked it so much.

“ Why do I? ay, very true, why do I? upon my word I cannot say, but I suppose I shall know when I get there. Oh, I recollect I am going to shoot Mr. M'Kay's grouse—how are they, Sir, pretty plenty?”

“ That's not so great a favour to grant,” replied the naturalist, “ and, if any body will trust you with a gun, (which, doubtless,

would be no proof of their sense,) I have no objection to your taking a day upon the muirs, (which you would take, whether I had or no,) provided you do not shoot at my windows, and will bring Lady Brachenshaw any muirfowl, or *tetrao tetrix*, that is daft enough to be killed by you."

"Well, I could have sworn we should be excellent friends; we took a liking to each other from the first. But who is Lady Brachenshaw?" "Lady Brachenshaw! who but the lady of the manor? She that is Mrs. M'Kay." Ardourly begged to know if he meant Brachenshaw on Dee side; and, being answered in the affirmative, said he was happy they were bound for the same neighbourhood; his own destination being Invercraig, which was but a few miles from Brachenshaw. Mr. M'Kay expressed some surprise, and appeared to be struggling with his

whiskey to collect his ideas, which, like an army dispersed by the enemy, were running in every direction ; but they had been running for some time, and the greater part of them were out of sight, so that the general beat to quarters in vain.

“ I ’ve some sort of recollection,” he said, “ of hearing you talked about there.”

“ Very likely, Sir, I was there about two years since.”

“ ’Twas said that Invercraig had borrowed a son of some old acquaintance, who, as I think, was to be there somewhere about now. But I am old, and remember things badly. You ’ll not be the lad yourself, I trust ?” “ And why not ?” said Henry ; his thoughts immediately recurring to his mysterious letter.

“ Do you mean you are the lad himself then ?” Henry assented. “ I ’m sorry for

it, I'm sorry for it—go home again as fast as you can.”

Henry inquired further, but the old man checked himself as he was going to reply. “ Why so, d'ye ask ? how should I know ? how—that is, the bottle's out, and I'll e'en take a nap beside Lady Brachenshaw and her thirteen petticoats.” The young men urged him to explain what he meant, but he grew pettish, and would make no further communications, save and except that he thought them a brace of puppies ; with which sentiment he closed the conversation, and the trap-door through which he had vanished like the ghost in a pantomime.

Henry was perplexed at Mr. M'Kay's advice, nor was his friend less so ; and they began to think there was something more serious in the note than they had

at first suspected. Nothing satisfactory, however, could be obtained from their own conjectures, and they were compelled to delay any further inquiry till Mr. M'Kay had slept off the effects of the whiskey; when, indeed, the chances were that he would be doubly cautious.

It was now six o'clock, and the party being freed from the company of the new married couple, who gave very audible proof of enjoying a sound slumber, went upon deck to breathe the fresh air. They had made a great way from the land, of which only a blue indication was visible, and the breeze was still bearing them from it. Miss Grey felt almost alarmed as, in Raleigh's phrase, the craft lay gunnel under, and its mast seemed cracking with the fulness of its sails; but she was soon convinced of being in no danger, and received as full en-

joyment from the beauty of the evening and the novelty of her situation, as could be felt by an affectionate heart, which was borne from a happy home to new friends and a new country. It was just the mood for her new admirer to profit by, and Ardourly had too much consideration to mar their happiness by his presence—he sat at a distance from them, and amused himself with a book; so that, for two good hours, they met with no interruption to the advancement of their mutual good will; and, ere they went below, had their unconscious feelings pretty truly unfolded to them in the wild song of a sea boy on the rigging.

Thou art lovely in every place,
At every moment dear;
But, oh! thou art doubly so
When I gaze upon thee here.

The more we regret fond hearts,
We have left far o'er the tide,
The more we rely on the one
Which is beating by our side.

Yon planet that looks so bright,
When a thousand more are by,
Will it not be brighter far
When the rest have left the sky?

They found Mr. and Mrs. M'Kay just risen ; the former something more collected, and the latter rather better—in her replies to the gentlemen's inquiries there was a marked difference ; to Henry she was very profuse of her civility, while to his less fortunate companion there was a studied shortness and distance of manner, which rather surprised him till he discovered the cause. The mystery was soon out, for her lack of discretion left her character and propensities

open to general inspection, and the whole of Raleigh's offence was deduced from the superior prospects of his friend, of which, it appeared, her husband had sufficiently informed her to flatter certain ideas, ever on the alert, of providing for her niece. Emily knew very well what she was about, (for it was by no means the first time she had been the subject of such plotting), and she coloured with shame and vexation. Mrs. M'Kay was doatingly, but not disinterestedly, fond of her; she thought that the beauty and accomplishments of her *protégée* reflected credit on her own discernment in bringing them forward; she loved to have it said, that *she* first discovered the dawning beauty; that, but for *her*, the talent for music, the delicate voice, would have remained uncultivated and unknown. But, independent of the satisfaction she received

from appropriating to herself the full half of the praises bestowed upon her niece, there was great convenience in having such a person about her; for, during her maiden life, she would otherwise have found some difficulty in persuading the gentlemen to hand her to her chair, and make themselves so very useful as she frequently found them. Besides this, there was infinite amusement derived from the speculations she made for her of a matrimonial nature; she thought women were born to be married, and for nothing else; and, though very near out in her calculations with regard to herself, nothing could be said to shake this general principle.

On her first coming on board she had set down one of the gentlemen for her nephew, and was well pleased when Raleigh shewed signs of a liking for Miss Grey. As she lay in bed in the early part of the day, sick as she

was, she lent an attentive ear to their *tête-à-tête*, and made sure that she discovered a partiality of such rapid growth as must lead to serious proposals before the end of the voyage. This she took the earliest opportunity of communicating to Mr. M'Kay, begging him to find out all the young gentleman's history, that she might be prepared with a reply; but the disclosures her husband was enabled to make, caused a material alteration in her plans, and none but Ardourly was to be the happy man. Whatever intimacy had taken place between Raleigh and Emily was now a cause of chagrin; and she proceeded, with much despatch, to effect a retrograde movement; the hopes of the former she meant to dissipate by her distant coolness, and to turn those of the latter to the advantages of the other connexion.

As soon as Henry could get rid of Mrs.

M'Kay's overwhelming courtesy, he returned to the subject which most interested him, and for which the shrewd old Scot seemed prepared. "Why, as for saying you had best go home again, I only meant that our parts of the Highlands are in a perturbed state just now, and I would advise none to go amongst them who are able to stay away."

"I might ask, if this did not apply to yourself as well as to me; but what is the disturbance you allude to?"

Mr. M'Kay said, it was the desperation of those who lately lived by running spirits, who, by the interference of the military, newly stationed at the most convenient places for the prevention of that traffic, had been driven, in many instances, from offences against the revenue to a violation of life and property.

Mrs. M'Kay looked horror-struck, but her friend and well-wisher, Raleigh, endeavoured to comfort her by vowing that Scotland was a villanous country, for, if a respectable lady escaped from marauders, there was imminent danger of her going through the auto-da-fé ceremony for a witch.—Mrs. M'Kay experienced another shock, and her spouse, putting on his usual dry grin, observed that she looked as if she expected to be so honoured herself.

Henry was but ill satisfied with the old gentleman's explanation, and his curiosity increased, but the means of satisfying it were to be sought at a more convenient season, when Mr. M'Kay might be less wary and less desirous of discussing other topics; for, at present, he was revising and correcting the whole system of natural philosophy from the mite to the mammoth.

On the third day from that on which they left London, our party found themselves within sight of Leith, and Mrs. M'Kay now began to renew the importunities with which she had besieged Ardourly to join them in their journey to the Highlands, instead of travelling by separate conveyances. Ardourly objected to this proceeding, as Captain Raleigh, who was not invited, would then be left to travel by himself; but the inconvenience was soon remedied; for, hostile as Mrs. M'Kay was to Raleigh, she preferred having his company to losing that of his friend, and the invitation was immediately extended to him. There was no danger of an excuse here; but it happened very unfortunately, that after this point was settled, Henry started another objection which was not so easily to be overruled; and this was, the urgent necessity he professed to be

under of arriving at Invercraig, (a distance of an hundred miles) on the following evening; such rapidity would ill suit the infirmities of Mr. M'Kay, who, to cut up the whole plan at once, was obliged to stop a day at Edinburgh on business. Great was the disappointment of Mrs. M'Kay at this obstacle; but, as it was unavoidable, it occurred to her that the first thing now to be done was to retract her proposal to Raleigh. It would have been too ill bred to do this in a direct way, but she went as little short of it as possible. "Perhaps, Captain Raleigh," said she, "as Mr. Ardourly cannot accompany us, you may wish to be absolved from your engagement; if so, I beg you will use no ceremony with us."

"Indeed, I greatly prefer making the journey with your Ladyship," replied Raleigh, who perceived her drift, and highly enjoyed

the dilemma in which she had placed herself.

“ Mr. Ardourly will do very well without me.” “ But you forget that we are to stay a day, and perhaps more, at Edinburgh.”

“ That is just what I wish to do myself.”

“ But it is possible we may stay a fortnight.”

“ My dear Madam, that will suit me better still.”

Lady Brachenshaw was quite disconcerted, but, after a moment's consideration, replied, with a look which we put on when we think we have made a capital hit. “ It is impossible that you can suffer Mr. Ardourly to travel alone, when the country is so infested by robbers.”

“ That is the very reason,” returned the provoking Captain, “ why I should afford the little protection in my power to your Ladyship.”

Mrs. M'Kay's resources were all exhausted, and, to her consummate mortification, it was settled that Raleigh was to occupy the place in the vehicle which was intended for Henry. This mortification was not at all lessened by Mr. M'Kay, (who had hitherto been a silent listener, and amused himself with conjecturing what his wife would say next,) for, as soon as the bargain was ratified, he whispered to her loud enough for the rest to hear, " You have shot at a pigeon and killed a crow, eh, Lady Brachenshaw?" But above all, (for he had taken a sort of liking to the " humorous, daft lad," who had found it would be good policy to attend to his learned discourses,) he invited him to dine with them that day at their hotel, and to spend the evening in teaching Miss Grey to sketch butterflies.

They were all now put ashore in the boat,

and Henry having obtained nothing further from Mr. M'Kay than a caution as to where he slept, (seeing that the beds in Scotland were somewhat infested by the *cimex lectularius*, or red bug of Linnæus,) as soon as he could provide himself and his servant with horses, bade adieu to his new friends, and congratulating Raleigh on his happy mode of conveyance, commenced his journey.

CHAPTER III.

Whence comest thou? What wouldst thou? Thy name?

Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face
Bears a command in't.

Say, what's thy name?

CORIOLANUS.

THE first fifty miles presented no occurrence worthy of note, and Ardourly dismounted late in the evening, to pass the night at Cupar in Angus. Early the next day he was mounted again, but had not rode far before his steed, which was none of the best, shewed evident signs that it had not forgotten the labours of the preceding day. This unlucky recollection had likewise considerable effect on the other quadruped, which, from the badness of the roads and the frequency of its stumbles,

contrived to fall dead lame. The further the travellers went the worse grew the animals, and the less passable the ways, and, at length they were reduced to the necessity of dismounting to walk. There was now full leisure for Henry to survey the scene around him, but had there been less he would possibly have admired it more: the day was clear and sunny, and a high wind swept the clouds in volumes round the crags on either side of him; the valley between them was prolonged in sympathetic desolation, and not a living creature but the lessening eagle, not a house nor even a tree was to be seen. Henry looked upon the length of his journey and the means by which it was to be accomplished, with about the same satisfaction which we receive from the contemplation of a large bill and an empty purse, but his countenance was suddenly brightened.

and his mind roused from such painful calculations, by the faint but distinct sound of a drum. He strained his eyes in the direction, and perceived at a great distance, where a small brook crossed the winding of the road, a line of diminutive figures passing over a thin aërial bridge; these, he had no doubt, were a party of soldiers who, he had heard, were to leave Cupar that morning, and halt for the night at the Spital of Glen-shee; and, as his situation was not very agreeable, nor indeed very safe, he resolved to do his best to overtake them, and halt there likewise; which, from the state of his horses, would be the utmost he could perform that day, though still twenty-five miles from his journey's end.

It was near the evening before he came up with the objects of his pursuit, who were, as he surmised, the sol-

diers destined for Glenshee, where they arrived about sun-set. It was a lone and miserable public-house, (far different from the smart inn now erected,) in the most wild seclusion of the Grampians, and the inhabitants, both in manners and appearance, seemed made for the scenery around them. As soon as the parties had come to some understanding as to the wants of the one and the capabilities of the other, the accommodation was found to be choice and abundant; Ardourly and the officer being to occupy the same dormitory with mine host and hostess, the latter of whom passed many eulogiums on the bed, which was as large and beautiful as a gentleman could wish. It was with rueful visages that the travellers inquired if they were *all* to sleep in the same bed, and they considered themselves fortunate in being answered in the

negative; there was a fine curtain to draw across the room, and, if the gentlemen would not peep through the holes, it would be as good as a wall. The other gentlemen in the red coats, and the gentleman holding the beasts, and the beasts themselves, should have some heather in the stable.

Where there is no alternative, there is, or *should* be, no dispute; and the travellers resolved to be satisfied with a promise, that the poorness of their accommodation should be fully atoned for by the richness of their fare. To effect this laudable intention of their entertainers, an instantaneous war was waged with the cocks and hens; and, a due despatch being used in the other appertainments to the feast, Ardourly soon found it in a state of forwardness, and thought it was now time to see if his horses were equally fortunate with himself.

In the yard which enclosed the sorry apology for a stable, he was somewhat surprised to encounter the scrutiny of a stout raw-boned young man, who appeared to regard him with particular solicitude. The wildness of his whole figure seemed nearly allied to the maniac ; but a single glance of his small, grey, and deep-sunk eye, which flickered like a glow-worm through his long white hair, tangled and flaky as the forest pony, bespoke a sharpness of intellect which might have been creditable enough to the owner, if every muscle of his flat and freckled face had not combined to characterize the undeniable thief. His head was bare, as were his feet and legs, his only covering being a ragged tartan jacket and breeches of the same, hanging over the knee in unconfined tatters. If Ardourly was surprised at the first sight, he was more so when this

ungainly object, bending forwards and slyly beckoning, uttered something like his own name ; at the same time, skulking round a corner and looking about him with a cunning timidity, with which he might be supposed to preface an attack upon the hen-roost. Having followed him to a place where they were concealed from the persons employed in rubbing down the horses, Henry demanded what he wanted, but was answered in Gaelic ; he then pointed to the house, signifying the necessity of an interpreter, but this by no means suited his friend, who shook his head in unequivocal disagreement. Having let him so far into his mind, he proceeded to rummage with both hands amongst the various crannies of his small-clothes for that which might be used as a pocket ; as soon as the right hole was found, a note was produced, addressed

to Henry Ardourly, Esq., and, in a moment the messenger was out of sight.

Ardourly hastily broke it open, and to his astonishment, recognised the hand of his late correspondent.

“ Once more Mr. Ardourly is urged not
“ to despise the warning of one who is anxious
“ for his welfare, but who finds it impossible
“ to serve him otherwise than in this mysterious manner. Since he *has* ventured
“ hither, he will do well to be cautious of all
“ strangers, and silent upon the advice he has
“ received.”

He felt more perplexed than ever; it was now evident that Raleigh's surmise was unfounded, and that these threatened perils were not designed to detain him at home, but really as the letters stated, to dissuade him from coming to Scotland; since the bearer employed, and the wafer

which was scarcely dry, sufficiently proved that the note he held in his hand was not only written here, but within the last hour, and consequently very near the spot on which he stood. His first impulse was to pursue the fugitive, but he was unsuccessful; for, though there was but one road, and that straight enough to shew a much greater distance than he could possibly have gone in the time, yet the numberless sheep-tracks and ravines which led from it to the intricacies of the bordering hills, might have enabled him to elude the observation of an hundred pair of eyes, had he been so disposed. Ardourly next had recourse to inquiry, but could obtain no accounts of him, except that his name was Wandering Willie, and that he was very much in the habit of mistaking the goods of other people for his own.

It was, perhaps, with more curiosity to discover his fair friend, than fear of the dangers which awaited him, that Henry found himself involved in the dark web of adventure; and, if he had sense to laugh at the romantic visions of beauty in distress, which, perforce crowded upon his mind, they certainly formed the subject of a very interesting reverie, which was only broken by the landlady's vociferations for the gentleman that was to dine with the Captain; with sundry apologies for Wandering Willie, whose nimble fingers had snapped up one of the roasted fowls, and whose nimble feet had outstripped all likelihood of a re-capture.

The young officer being a type of most of his profession, (that is to say, frank, gay, and giddy,) proved a not ineligible companion in the gloom of the twilighted hills, nor

till he observed that he could not find the way to his whiskey, did either of them remember how long they had sat. But now the soldier reluctantly discovered that it was time to dispose of his men for the night, and left the table, confounding the hard fate which had sent him to catch thieves, and sentimentalize in the mountains.

While he was absent, Ardourly walked to the window to contemplate the bold effect of the moon which was just then partially visible; all was dark and silent beneath, except the faint and melancholy cry of the muirfowl, which gave token that their heathy domains were undisturbed by the habitations of man. He looked and listened with increasing interest as the full floating orb ascended above the rugged outline of the crags, and by degrees revealed the patches of heath and pale grey stone which diver-

sified their sides. At one time he fancied he saw figures moving on the road, but, at that moment a cloud passing over the moon, prevented him from ascertaining whether he saw correctly; and, when the light returned, nothing could be distinguished but the shadows of scattered fragments. He believed he had been deceived, and turning his eyes another way, perceived some writing scratched on a pane of the window; which, on being examined in a direction which placed it opposite to the light, proved to be poetry, and perfectly legible. The formation of the letters, and its strange accordance with the advice of his unknown friend, convinced him at once that both were from the same hand.

Yet hie thee back; yon bank is bright
Where starry dew-drops catch the light.

And flow'rs, with tendrils twined, diffuse
Their mingling sweets from blended hues,
But dream not that thy limbs shall rest
Where the coy springling hide, like lovers newly
blest.

Yet hie thee back ; on yonder stream
Full gaily plays the living beam,
And rock and foliage seem to dance
As eddying waves on waves advance,
But rock shall wear, and wave shall sink
Ere thou shalt see thy face reflected from the
brink.

The wild deer proudly stalks the glen,
The heath-cock chuckles far from men,
But there thy voice shall never scare
From peaceful muir or secret lair ;
The only breath of thine they find
Is when thy dying sigh comes struggling down the
wind.

While he was reading these lines over a
second time, a form passed quickly by, and

presently a stranger was ushered into the room, with the landlady's regrets that there was no other place to show the gentleman into. Henry begged she would not think of apologizing, and the stranger, with some slight expression of unwillingness to intrude, took his seat at the further end of the room. For some minutes both were silent; the one continuing to muse over the poetry, and the other patiently waiting till it should please mine hostess to bring in his promised refreshment; but, being at length wearied with the riddle which he could not solve, Henry turned to break the ice with his new companion, whose large glistening eyes alone were visible from the dark corner he had appropriated. They were fully bent upon our hero; at which, however, he was not much surprised, (for, in a room for the accommodation of travellers, there is little to

do but to stare at each other,) and he soon succeeded in removing the distance between them. At the same time, he found (what the darkness had prevented him from seeing,) that the person he conversed with was one of a better order than he had expected to meet in such a place. The conversation naturally turned upon the sport of the muirs, which, it seemed, he had been pursuing further than he intended. "But no matter," he said, "my volume and my fowling-piece have often led me further than I was aware, and have not unfrequently seduced me to a heather bed, as they have to-night."

"You do not proceed to-night?" said Ar-
dourly.

"I have some distance to go; but the weather is warm, and a lodging in the open air will not be unpleasant."

"But have you no dread from the disturbed state of the country?"

The stranger answered with a slight tone of irony—"What dread can there be when our masters send so many brave soldiers for our protection?"

The officer, having performed his duty, now re-appeared, followed by the jingling usquebaugh equipage, and the glimmer of a farthing rush-light. "Good luck to the boys," said he, "I have lodged them safe in the hen-house and pig-sty. They will make but a sorry appearance when I march off with the heroic remnant the fleas may be pleased to leave me."

"What time do you propose starting in the morning?" asked Henry.—"As soon as my warriors have done scratching themselves, which, I hope, will be soon after sun-rise. Will you be ready to march by that time?"

"If I might offer my advice and guidance," interrupted the stranger, "you would

accompany my moon-light walk, which lies in the direction you are going."

"Nay, you cannot be sure of that."

"Did you not tell me? Then it was the woman who shewed me in—My knowledge of the country enables me to make the walk to Invercraig a dozen miles shorter than it is by the road."

"Indeed, I thank you for the offer, but were I to accept it, I doubt if my arrival would not be at too unseasonable an hour to procure me admittance. If I might offer my advice in return, I should recommend you to arm yourself against your expedition at the fuming bowl of our captain." So saying, he left the room to try what discoveries he could make respecting the poetry, and likewise to find whether this stranger had really learnt his destination from the hostess; which he was inclined to doubt,

believing that she was ignorant of it herself. To the first question of "Who wrote the verses?" he received a "dinna ken;" and to the second, of "What company had been there lately?" mine hostess (for the honour of her house), returned such a list that it was impossible to say who might be the poet. He then asked, "if she knew whither he was going?" to which he received another "dinna ken;" and with this much information he returned; not altogether sorry that he had declined a moon-light walk with a person who seemed to know more of his affairs than he had any need to do. In addition to this, he did not exactly like the appearance of his volunteer guide, whose sallow countenance (though graced by good features) seemed *constrained* to the expression of frank and gentlemanly civility, rather than to possess it naturally; for, behind

this, there appeared a harshness of character, and something approaching to a scowl, indicative both of pride and ferocity. It was possible that this might be the very person against whom he was warned by his anonymous friend; and, when he recalled the figures of several persons whom he believed he had seen just before the stranger's appearance, he was well pleased to remember how well the little inn was defended. He re-entered the room, and found the stranger engaged with a small pocket volume; the refreshment he had ordered remained untouched, and he did not join in the conversation for some time; only now and then looking up, as the officer mentioned the arrangement he had made in his new avocation of justice of the peace; or, as Ardourly spoke of his voyage and the companions of it, which seemed to have particular interest.

“ I have met old M'Kay,” said the soldier, “ and he talked so knowingly about the thieves, that, I swear, if it were not from his decrepitude, I could almost believe him to be the captain of the banditti.”

“ Dotard !” exclaimed the stranger, and his eye fell again upon his book ; but, thinking it necessary to explain, he added—“ I have seen him in Edinburgh—I hear he is married !”

“ Yes,” said Ardourly, “ and the bride has pressed me to stay with them at Branchenshaw ; but—”

The soldier laughed. “ But you do not wish to give the bridegroom cause of jealousy ? That is very considerate, but, if you do not accept the invitation, I shall certainly be your substitute and billet myself upon him, for it is just the quarter I am ordered to. Besides, it is said,

that he has a pretty relation staying there."

The stranger again raised his dark eye, but did not speak; and Ardourly replied, that, as he had not heard the young lady mentioned, he supposed that the old gentleman's philosophical pursuits and hymeneal happiness had driven her from his mind. "The Laird of Brachenshaw," he added, is "likely to be well garrisoned, for my friend, Captain Raleigh, intends to quarter upon him likewise, in honour of his wife's niece."

"Do you mean Raleigh who commanded a ship here in the North Sea?" "The same."

The soldier said he was a gallant officer, and he wished he had not been removed from his station, which had since been overrun by privateers. "Conceive," he continued, "one fellow has been cruising there (a

Frenchman), who had the impudence, not long ago, to come on shore. A fisherman saw him landed, towards night-fall, among the rocks near Aberdeen."

" Indeed !" the stranger said, " Did he not follow him ?"

" A man, supposed to be him, was traced from Aberdeen to Kinkairn ; from whence he took the road to Tullich, which, by-the-bye," turning to Henry, " is not far from Invercraig ; so that you may, perhaps, fall in with him. He is, of course, thought to be a spy—so say my instructions," producing a paper, and reading, " middle-aged, middling stature, strong, square built, black hair, well favoured."—" Upon my word, Sir," addressing the stranger, " you answer the description in every thing but costume ; and that *tome première* on the back of your book would almost authorize me to detain you.

In faith, I must make you my prisoner till to-morrow morning at least, unless you ransom yourself by drinking a glass of my toddy, for, as yet, you have not tasted a drop." The stranger smiled. "I will rather pay the penalty than suffer the inconvenience;" and, having drank his glass and pocketed his book, he observed it was time for him to depart. "Perhaps, gentlemen, we may meet again—till then, farewell." Thus saying, he resumed his highland bonnet, and, throwing his plaid over a great coat, fitted close to his shape, bowed slightly, and was gone.

CHAPTER IV.

Come then, my dearest son, I'll now give thee
A taste of my love to thee: be thou my deputy,
The factor and disposer of my business;
Keep my accounts, and order my affairs;
They must be all your own.

Rowley.

EARLY in the morning Ardourly arrived at Castleton, whence, taking leave of his escort, he proceeded to Invercraig, of which he came in sight, while its tall grey tower was but just distinguishable through the sunny haze which surrounded it. His way lay by the side of the Dee, and the rush of the water, mingling with the voice of the linnet in the brakes beside it, gave an additional cheerfulness to the feeling which was raised by the termination of a long journey, and the immediate prospect of meeting his kind benefac-

tor. Now and then, however, an unsatisfactory thought intruded itself, which considerably damped this pleasure ; and it arose from the possibility that the domains, which he was taught to look upon as his future property, might become so to the detriment of others who had better claims to them. This he had often hinted to his friend, who as often assured him that his fears were groundless ; but Ardourly was nice in his ideas of honour and justice, and when he accepted the proposal it was with a degree of reluctance for which few, perhaps, would have seen any occasion. There was another reflection also, of which he could not divest himself ; namely, that he had been persuaded to leave an honourable profession for an unworthy dependency, and this without feeling his pride satisfied by any ties of relationship which might warrant the adoption ; a reflection which na-

turally brought with it a remembrance of the many mortifications to which his new situation subjected him; such as the Laird's caprice, the slights of his acquaintance, and, perhaps, the final disappointment of his expectations, with the pity, or derision, of all who understood them.

Thus it was with a mixture of pain and pleasure that Ardourly found himself at Invercraig, awaiting the appearance of its master, who had not yet risen from his bed. He had not been there many minutes when he beheld, through the door which opened into the great hall, the streamers of a dressing-gown, flying aloft with the rapid motion of the wearer, and, presently, in darted the tall, thin figure of Ayrton, of Invercraig, with "Welcome, my son, a thousand and a thousand times," which was backed by an embrace so warm as left Ardourly

scarce breath enough to make a suitable reply.

Mr. Ayrton's age was between fifty and sixty, but he was much younger in spirit and activity. He was a strong contrast to the generality of his neighbours ; a secluded life having, in no degree, impaired the polish of an education in more fashionable circles ; and the beau of the last century remained the admiration of the present. So much was this the case, that Henry half suspected, as soon as his sables were thrown aside, and the little white wig re-instated, that a new bride might console him for the loss of the old one ; an event which might materially alter the course of his own future life, but, whose idea, gave him no uneasiness, as it would afford him a fair pretext to recede from a compact he already began to repent. But, in this supposition, it is probable that

Ardourly did not take into consideration the many points of Mr. Ayrton's character which were hostile to it. A second marriage was not at all likely, when the want of an heir only had forced him into a first; and, though the solemn look and decent shake of the head might be very proper at the present season, it was well known that his grief at getting rid of his shackles was not equal to his chagrin at putting them on. In short, he was not a marrying man; and rather preferred being the desire of the ladies in general than the property of any one in particular; but, as this was only a sentiment jocularly expressed by *himself*, it must not be understood to imply any thing like antiquated vanity, either of person or acquirements; for he was the most unaffected of human beings, and the genteel raillery, which was his usual style of conversation,

was as often exerted at the expense of what he termed his own foppishness, as it was against the roughness or other peculiarities of his neighbours.

The whole establishment of Invercraig corresponded, to a nicety, with the mind of its possessor. The outward, castellated appearance of the building, prepared the visitor for the rude interior and ungraceful hospitality of other days; but, once over the threshold, any one, suddenly transported ~~thither~~, might have believed himself in the near neighbourhood of fashion, and far removed from the barren hills, amongst which it seemed almost a miracle how so much elegance could be collected. And if, amongst downy sofas, gilded mirrors, and embroidered curtains, there appeared an over-exact taste in the minutiae of adornment; the well-assorted library, which was capacious enough

to allow a liberal distribution to every other apartment, fully redeemed Mr. Ayrton's character from the imputation of exclusive attention to trifles. Sometimes, indeed, he affected to be ashamed of the ornamental part of his house, and laid the whole credit of it to his wife; of whom we are sorry we can say nothing, except that she was wholly innocent of the charge; and had been now three months resident in the kirk-yard of Crathie.

As soon as the good man had hugged and squeezed the hand of his adopted as long as he thought necessary, he remembered he was but half shaved, and, conducting Ardourly to the breakfast-table that he might find employment till his return, withdrew to finish his toilet. "You know," he said, as he wheeled round with a flourish of his rose-coloured dressing-gown, "I was a beau in my

young days, and I have not yet managed to reform."

Whatever disagreeable sensations Ar-
dourly might have felt at becoming depend-
ant on another, they were much lessened by
the exceeding kindness of his reception, and
he determined, since the die *was* cast, to tor-
ment himself no more with the possible con-
sequences; as for those which were de-
nounced upon him as the result of a disobe-
dience to his secret adviser, and of a sojourn-
ment in a country where he might chance to
have an enemy, (though who he might be,
and how he was made so, remained a mys-
tery), they caused him so little uneasiness,
that he resolved not to mention to his bene-
factor a subject which might be productive
of needless alarm. At all events, he would
say nothing of it till he could lay hands
on the carcase of wandering Willie, or ex-

tract something more comprehensible from Mr. M'Kay.

In the mean time there was every thing to make him happy. His mind had never harmonized with the general society he had quitted, but possessed a natural refinement as different from the world of business around him, as a solitary line of poetry amidst a volume of prose. For such a one the retirement of Invercraig was rich in charms, which were not to be found elsewhere. There was undisturbed leisure for the studies of an enlightened understanding, with means as ample as could be enjoyed in a city; there was the blue dwelling-place of nature for contemplation, with the fleet foot of her mountain roe for diversion.

When Mr. Ayrton re-entered, he was dressed in an old-fashioned, but handsome suit of sables, with ornamental glass buttons,

silk stockings and pumps, as if he had been preparing for a ball-room; the only contradiction to such a surmise being a pair of short, black spatter-dashes. He again embraced Ardourly, and, surveying him all over, declared the two years of his absence had made him all that he ought to be.

The few attempts the Laird of Invercraig had made to look dismal at the first mention of his departed lady were all he could afford from his heart-felt pleasure, and he ceased, at once and altogether, to resist the opportunity she had left him of once more enjoying the liberty of a single man; the arrival of Henry, therefore, was to be triumphantly celebrated with bagpipe and Highland fling, and the Laird signified his intention of mounting his nag, to bid the company himself. "I scarcely remember how to ride," he said, "but you shall school me

in the noble art. I have a better bit of blood for you than you brought from Edinburgh, I promise you."

Ardourly was too old a horseman to feel any fatigue from the distance he had already come, and they went forth through glad faces and bobbing heads, assembled from every occupation about the premises to do honour to their young master, with whose frank good-nature and liberality they were acquainted from former experience. The Laird rode by his side the picture of exultation; his upright body more erect than ever, and his legs projecting before him like a pair of shafts—the very cue of his brown peruke seemed animated with glee; dancing merrily to the niggling shuffle of the galloway, who snorted and cocked his tail in all the pride of a half year's idleness.

Wherever they went, from the manse to

the farm, from the farm to the hovel, the congratulations were loud and long; and, as they conversed by the way, they continued to advance further and further in mutual satisfaction; the one, from a lively sense of the many kind arrangements which had been made for his comfort and amusement, and the other, from an increasing conviction that they could not have been made for a *protégé*, who would do more credit to his choice. With such feelings, Ardourly soon saw there had been no necessity for his very peremptory resolves to forget the inconveniences to which his new life was exposed; for they appeared to him as the shadows raised by a foolishly fastidious imagination, and glided away without requiring an effort to expel them. Indeed, he had not a wish to be gratified—yes, *one*—he found there would be one sort of society

indispensable amongst these mountain wildernesses, over which they would cast a romantic influence, and render lovelier what, in all situations, was still most lovely. His wish was to hear an account, corresponding with that which had been given by the young officer who had been his companion, of Mr. M'Kay's pretty relation; now the solitary inhabitant of Brächenshaw. Mr. Ayrton shook his head with a look of comical gravity, and vowed he would countenance no practices against the serenity of his Scottish maidens; Jessie Colraith in particular, because she happened to be the fairest, as well as the best, of them all. But Ardourly was not to be rallied from his subject, and discovered, what he never knew before, that Miss Colraith was a near connexion to Mr. Ayrton, and had not been mentioned in his last visit to Invercraig,

from the sense of a painful detail which must have followed ; but he was now come upon a different footing, and it was necessary that he should be informed of her history.

“ Our country,” the good Laird premised, “ has ever been a chosen scene of troubles, and, you are aware, it was amongst these that, some twenty years ago, I became acquainted with my good friend, your father, who was then a soldier ; but you are ignorant (perhaps, from his dislike to the subject,) of the particular circumstances under which that acquaintance commenced.

“ My kinsman, Colraith of Gleneldie, had made himself mistrusted by the prevailing party, from the harmless offence of not embracing it ; he was a man devoted to peace and to an amiable wife, from whom a hard sentence, built upon unjust accusations, condemned him to banishment ; and his

estates were confiscated. The man who expelled him upon his hopeless pilgrimage, and destroyed the mansion of his happiness, was your father. Burning with the ardour of a disposition, which twenty years have somewhat sobered down, I suspected he had gone beyond his commission, and sought redress. But he had only done a duty which he dared not disobey, and it appeared to have been one so truly hostile to his feelings, that instead of the enemy I had looked for, he became my friend. Gleneldie's wife had taken refuge with your whimsical acquaintance, M'Kay of Brachenshaw; but, though we afterwards obtained the restitution of his property to her and her infant, we could not comfort her—her husband was irrevocably banished, and—she died. Gleneldie too must be dead, for I have not heard of him these many years.

Jessie has remained at Brachenshaw ever since; the child of simple and affecting excellence; for, though her fortune amply supplies her with the means of following her inclinations, whatever they might be, her whole attention is confined to the old man's comforts, and an unpretending kindness to all who need it."

" I am afraid," said Henry, " the society of the new lady of Brachenshaw will not add much to her happiness. Suppose, my dear Sir, you ask her to take up her residence at Invercraig? Her old relation, in his new circumstances, may not be sorry to part with her?"

" What stay with young fellows like us! Well, be it so, with all my heart. Perhaps we may find her a husband between us.

" Upon my word, it is not at all impossible, if she will forgive in the son the un-

willing duty of the father ; and, I will bear your invitation to her to-morrow."

Ardourly's high-wrought imagination was ringing the changes upon this new charm of his Scottish life, without once calculating on the possibility of an objection on the part of the young lady, when the course of their visits to the stragglers of the muir brought them to the foot of the thunder-rifted Loch-na-Garr, which they surveyed against the sun, in deep shadow. The bright summer clouds were sleeping on its triple-peaked summit, and the mist of a hundred rivulets was creeping up its side, disguising its rugged crags, and softening and uniting its many colours into one majestic and unvaried sheet of ethereal blue. The only sign of life in its great stillness, was the steady wheel of the eagle, which seemed rejoicing over the unassailable secu-

city of its eyrie, and shrieking homage to the genius of the surrounding hills.

While they were admiring the magnificence of this scene, the Laird told Henry that whenever he chose to ascend, he must not forget to look out for the picturesque abode of a personage who would give him as dainty a repast as he could wish for, and tell his fortune besides.—He meant the famed Kitty Rankie, whose familiar appropriation of what did not belong to her, had made it convenient for her to forego all approximation to those who had any thing to lose; while her well-tutored offspring, yclept Wandering Willie, was employed to market for her, in conjunction with his other avocation as spy for the smugglers.

Ardourly turned at the name of Wandering Willie, and asked if it were likely that he would be found with his mother; but was

told that he was never to be found *anywhere*, or would long since have occupied a place in the Tolbooth.

“ I have, nevertheless, a great mind to make the attempt. You must know, the gentleman is an acquaintance of mine, and dined at my expense yesterday. Yonder is a boy to hold my horse, and a man who will, perhaps, shew me the way, while you jog leisurely on.”

As this person approached, with a gun and several dogs, Henry recognised an old friend, and the Laird, wishing them an agreeable visit, did as he had been desired.

“ Kenneth,” said Ardourly, “ I rejoice to see you !” and Kenneth was no less so to see his young master. He was a young man who called himself game-keeper, but was, indeed, so much the Laird’s favourite, that he employed himself pretty nearly as he

pleased. His slender form and pale face, which was handsome and full of expression, were the certain indication of the mountain bard. There was poetry in every tone of his voice, in every fold of his plaided garment, and the white collar, which fell unconfined over his neck, displayed his throat with a grace and negligence which were equally remarkable. His self-educated mind was of that stamp, which, born to somewhat better prospects, still retained enough of its natural gaiety to struggle with the melancholy occasioned by disappointment; it was modest and grateful; and the praise which Henry bestowed upon his wild poesy was repaid by a devotion, perhaps, the warmer from the ridicule which was lavished upon him by his less-gifted companions. He had never been so happy as when ranging the wilds with Ardourly, and they now bent

themselves to the steep of the mountain in the lively conversation of kindred spirits ; tempered, however, on the part of Kenneth, by a diffidence, of which no familiarity could make him forgetful.

After much labour, and when they had proceeded about half-way to the summit, they gained a small flat, where they stopped to breathe. In the midst of it was a little lake, surrounded by huge crags, and, above these, the irregular peaks of the mountain formed a scene peculiarly adapted for the residence of the strange being they were seeking. They looked round them, but could discover no traces of a habitation ; and, indeed, it was no easy matter to distinguish a solitary hovel in such a place, where, if seen, it might be taken for one of the numberless fragments around it.

“ It should be somewhere hereabouts,”

said Kenneth, "and see yonder, behind these stones, if there is not the steam of the old girl's kettle!"

They had some distance to clamber before they obtained a sight of the hut, which was constructed against a rock with the rude materials which nature had scattered near it in such abundance. It was at the end of a narrow defile, between two precipices, which completely enclosed it on every side but the entrance, so as to protect it from the winds which, otherwise, might have swept it off like a leaf in autumn. A small rivulet which issued from one side, and, crossing the path, disappeared at the other, added to the beauty and convenience of the spot; and, by the side of this, was seen the most appropriate figure a painter could have introduced. She sat with her back towards the intruders, and was busily employed in washing rags.

Kenneth whispered, "She has not often such a tender regard for her wardrobe; I guess she'll be looking out for a holiday. Poor body, it is a lonely life for her; she is hunted out of society for a witch and a thief too, and she is only one of them."

Ardourly could hardly help laughing at Kenneth's compassionate defence of Kate's character, but bade him be silent while they observed her more closely. The articles she had washed were spread beside her to dry, and she was now preparing to immerse one, which, from its quality, seemed to have been borrowed from a more fashionable owner. Kenneth looked over her shoulder to examine it, while she muttered to herself, with a tone of admiration, her praises on "the flimsy bit," which would assuredly be a charm against all future evil.

"You may say that, Kitty Rankie," interrupted Kenneth, "for it has been pressed

to the bosom of the young lady of Brachenshaw."

Kate started up—"Eh, Kenneth, ye made me jump!"

"Ay, and you shall jump higher still; Kate; you shall be whipped for thieving. How came you by the young lady's scarf?"

"It will not be the young lady's scarf, Kenneth. You will be always full of fancies about her; as if nobody else had fine gear. Lay it down, ye song-scratching loon; lay it down, and make me a rhyme upon it, or else go and hang yourself."

"Not yet, Kate," he replied, producing a small whiskey bottle—"we must have a cup together first—take a swig, old girl; and make haste, before the devil runs away with you."

Kate drank deep. "Eh, Kenneth, it

takes one's breath away! Come in, ye puny lath, and I'll give you to eat. There is a bonny pullet in the pot."

"Where did you steal it? No, I will have nothing to say to it; you never say grace, for fear you should affront old Nick!"

The dame was going to reply, but, turning her head, perceived Ardourly, who briefly paid his compliments, and begged to be introduced to Mr. Wandering Willie. "He brought me a letter yesterday, and I forgot to pay him for his trouble."

Kate seemed rather confounded; but, after a moment's hesitation, declared she knew nothing of him, and had quite disinherited him for his ungodly life. Nevertheless, she would have no objection to take care of the money his honour might be pleased to leave."

"Ay, Kate, I always knew you were an

honest woman; but look at this purse, and tell me, who sent him to the Spital of Glenshee?"

"It was a brave purse," Kate said, "but she knew no more of the letter than she did of her wicked Willie, who might very likely be in the Tolbooth, if he was not hanged already."

Henry left no means untried to ascertain the real history of his mysterious correspondence; but the wily beldam, in the course of her predatory life, had gained too much experience in courts of law to be discomfited by cross-questions; and our hero found, to his mortification, that he must return as ignorant as he came.

"I have a great mind," said he, as a last resource, "to take you to Invercraig, and see what *he* can do with you."

"Do, and I'll go blithely—there is rare

cheer at the Laird's—Kenneth, give me my mantle ; and do not speer as if your young lady's bosom was beneath it still.—' See what the Laird will do with me,' did his honour say? We will make ourselves so fine, there will be no saying what he may do with me, now the mistress is gone."

" Well, well, Kate; we will save him the temptation ; and, for fear you should be too much for the morals of your friends, I must even make bold with your piece of finery.—Nay, never mind parting with it ; if I find it is not stolen, I will give you double the value—meantime, here is a crown to keep you honest."

Kate begged to have Kenneth's bottle thrown into the bargain ; and Ardourly walked off, well satisfied with his purchase, which he meant to have an opportunity of restoring to the fair owner, the next day

“ And how came you, my good Kenneth, to know this belonged to Miss Colraith ?” The pensive countenance of the poet was lighted with a ray of enthusiasm. “ She was the first to encourage my humble muse, and her bright face will be the last I shall forget.— Every trifle that she has looked upon my memory holds sacred.”

“ But how could old Kate have got it ?”

Kenneth answered, that she was in the habit of going to Brachenshaw for charity, and, when she received one thing, generally stole another.

Ardourly had paid so long a visit that the Laird was at home before him, complaining bitterly that the high-fed fidget of his galloway had galled him worse than a travelling haberdasher on his first excursion, but the inconvenience did not take from the keenness of his wit, which was exercised,

without mercy, on the expedition of the following day.

“ But,” said he, as a wind up, “ are you aware that you have a rival in this affair ; or did my fair cousin’s lowly admirer allow you undisputed possession of her cast-off apparel ? That scarf is an old favourite, and has been the subject of his muse. I had once occasion to intrude within his sanctum, and gathered, amidst its poetical confusion, a few scattered fragments, which might not be intended for public admiration ; but here they are—somewhat rough and incorrect, perhaps, but, as they are purloined from the workshop, it is reasonable to suppose they may not have received the last polish.”

The lines to the scarf came first, and ran as follows :—

THOU silken thing, so rich and rare,
How coyly art thou clinging there !

Now, wreathed in folds of maiden grace,
Thou seem'st to woo the winds embrace ;
And now, with blush of varied stain,
Thou 'rt fluttering from its touch again ;
'Till, all confused with modest haste,
Thou'st wound thee round my lady's waist.

Oh, thou art like the meek-eyed maid
Whose snowy neck thou lovest to shade !
So fearful, and so passing fair,
We must not praise—yet how forbear ?

Thou flimsy silk, so closely press'd,
Tell me how beats my lady's breast—
If calmly sweet its pulses chime
To thoughts beyond yon starry clime,
Or vibrate to the wilder power
Of passion in its youthful hour.

If love the theme, oh timely say,
Her sighs are like the sighs of May,
And, while one budding hope they cherish,
Scatter an hundred more to perish !

If Heaven, oh let her ask the grace
Of him who wants a resting-place,
And leave, while barr'd from bliss above,
To worship where he dare not love!

Thou simple banner of my muse,
Well may I gaze upon thy hues!
No chieftain's standard ever drew
More captives in its train than you;
And could I, when this heart is cold,
But sleep within thy sacred fold,
The victor, on his proudest seat,
Might envy me my winding-sheet.

CHAPTER V.

Upon her eye-lids many graces sate,
Under the shadow of her even browes,
Working belgardes and ameroas retrate;
And everie one her with a grace endowes,
And everie one with meeknesse to her bowes;
So glorious mirrhour of celestiall grace,
And soveraine monument of mortall vowes,
How shall frayle pen describe her heavenly face,
For feare through want of skill her beauty to disgrace?
Fairy Queen.

THE residence of Mr. M'Kay was about ten miles from Invercraig, on the Dee, nearly opposite Castleton. It was a tall, grey building, half house and half castle, situated on a knoll of considerable height; so as to command an extensive view of the curves of the river through its rugged and abrupt scenery. The ground beneath it was adorned with the varied tints of fir and weeping birch almost interminably, and, on one side overhung a deep ravine; down

which the small river Quoich dashed with an impetuosity that was heard at considerable distance. It was at noon-day when Ardourly, whose way had been on the opposite bank, forded the Dee nearly where it received the sparkling gush of this little stream. He looked up at the sunk windows of the old, non-descript tenement, expecting to discover a face, about which his curiosity increased at every step; but it was not to be so gratified; and he was ushered up stairs and down stairs, through long passages, and round sharp angles; circumnavigating all the alterations and additions which had been made to the ancient tower by the present owner and his predecessors for a dozen generations, till he found himself in the Laird's *ain* room, where he was left to observe and meditate till Miss Colraith could be advertised of his visit. The apart-

ment bore evident marks of the universal genius of the master; in one corner was an old spinet, in another a galvanic battery, in a third a patent medicine-chest, and, in a fourth, a large glass-case of dried butterflies and stuffed monkeys, with sundry specimens of shells, flowers, and monstrosities. The book-shelves were loaded with tattered volumes, containing the elements of all knowledge; but the best dates of the progressive advancement of second childhood, were afforded by the uninterrupted collection of pictures. Those which, from the appearance of the frames, had been the first to adorn the walls, were chosen with much taste; but, in proportion as the frames were seen to be more new, their contents became less and less valuable; and, where the gilding was recent, they were so perfectly *outré* as to render it almost incredible that the former

ones could have been selected by the same hand. This decay of mind was likewise visible in the numerous statues of all sizes, which were stuck in every direction; some good and some bad, some fit to be seen, and others not; many of them were clad, Hindoo fashion, with a small apron of rag, and many were turned with their faces to the wall. The whole were covered with dust, which had been accumulating for years, probably, lest they should be damaged in removing it; though this was a needless care, as every thing in the room was old, broken, and seemingly forgotten, excepting the case of natural curiosities and the paintings, the latter of which were doomed to be touched and re-touched with endless perseverance, whenever the weather or other causes withheld Mr. M'Kay from his outdoor researches.

Henry could not exactly reconcile it to his ideas of delicacy, that Miss Colraith should see him in this mass of nudity—this connoisseur's harem—and received, with satisfaction, a summons to make another circumbendibus of the Brachenshaw chaos to the presence of its young lady. The journey was performed; in spite of Cupids and Venuses, without kicking over a single statue; and the grace with which he was welcomed was quite enough to finish the work which had been so busily carried on by imagination. Jessie Colraith was the exact opposite to the being whom he had looked for; and it was, perhaps, from this cause that she appeared so transcendently beyond her. He had expected to see the fair-haired, blue-eyed, genuine maid of Albyn, such as had formed the theme of song from Scotland's earliest minstrel; but the slender, tall,

and elegant figure which he now beheld, was black-eyed and raven-haired—not that bold black eye whose lustre is the triumph of conscious captivation, but the mild, declining orb whose languid radiance shone through the long lashes like a tremulous moon-beam on the midnight waters. Her dark eye-brow was narrow but regular, and arched in singular contrast to the pure whiteness of a Grecian forehead; and, if her cheek wore not the flush of mountain-health, it was not sickly, for the scented blush from the virgin bosom of the white rose was breathing and mantling through its transparency. The *contour* of her countenance was altogether of a stamp with her forehead; but, when she spoke, it was a question which was the loveliest, her voice or her person: it dwelt on the mind like the tale that delighted our childhood—it was

plaintive as the thought of absent friends, and thrilling as the hope of meeting them. Henry seated himself by her with a conviction that he never had seen so fair a creature in his life. Her first care was to apologize for the time she had kept him waiting, and the apartment he had been conducted to, which she believed to be only a lumber-room; not forgetting to assure him she had never seen the contents of it. But he was too much engaged in observing the maiden confusion of her appearance even to smile at the apprehension which occasioned it, and felt that he could gaze on her for ever, without thinking of one earthly thing besides. Unfortunately, such beatitude was not allotted to him, since he was limited to a morning visit, which could not, reasonably, comprise more than half an hour, and had, in that short time, to make

a proposal of very great importance. It was necessary, however, to watch the proper opportunity for commencing this subject, and, since he felt not a little anxious as to the result, he lost no time in hitting upon one which would lead to it.

He told her he had been a passenger with Mr. M'Kay and his party from England; and had the pleasure of calling to give a good account of them; this produced many inquiries respecting the additions to the Brachenshaw establishment; the younger of whom afforded a description with which she was perfectly charmed. "If," she said with a smile, "I am as lucky in the society of Mrs. M'Kay as I shall be in that of her niece, they will, indeed, be valuable acquisitions to our solitary habitation."

"Alas," replied Ardourly, "I fear you are of too sanguine a disposition! It is hardly

to be expected that you should find them *both* such as I have described Miss Grey. But will Miss Colraith permit me to speak without disguise?"

"Can you doubt it? my curiosity must naturally be great to hear your opinion; and, as I have not yet had an opportunity of forming any great friendship for my new relation, I shall not quarrel with you even if it *should* fall short of my hopes."

"I speak then," said Henry, who perceived that the distance between him and his fair companion was likely to be compromised in a confidential conversation, even before he got to the object of his mission, "I speak then with a full confidence in that assurance."

With such encouragement, he did not fail to do justice to his cause, by enlarging upon Mrs. M'Kay's various qualities

as forcibly as he could; watching earnestly to see if Miss Colraith's horror was proportionate to his exertions. Two or three times, she fancied, from his pausing, that the picture was finished; but found he was only considering where it would admit of an additional touch. At last, she laughingly broke in upon him, and declared she would hear no more last words; persuaded, as she was, that he was actuated by nothing but malice.—“For how,” said she, “is it possible that, in an acquaintance of three days, you should have observed as many disagreeable qualities as any one else could have discovered in twice the number of years?”

“You do me as much injustice as you suppose me to be guilty of towards Mrs. M'Kay. All the qualities, good or bad—”

“Nay, you have not mentioned one good one.”

“ All the qualities, then, that I have enumerated, are either what I observed myself, or what must, infallibly, be the companions of such. In short, I have not the least doubt that your new relation will make you perfectly miserable, unless—”

“ I am delighted you have a remedy to propose!”

“ Unless you will condescend to listen to a proposal from your excellent friend, Invercraig; which is simply this—that you will permit him to offer you a home where his greatest study will be to ensure your happiness. The jealousy of the new mistress of Brachenshaw—”

“ Pardon me for interrupting you. If she is the person you describe her, there will be the greater need of my attendance on the aged friend who has taken care of my infancy; and, whatever may be the treatment

I meet with, I shall submit to it with patience."

" But, supposing, Miss Colraith, that Mr. M'Kay himself should approve of the plan ?"

" Why, even then, I could not leave his fast declining years to the care of strangers. I have a debt of gratitude to the poor old man, which must bind me to him closer as his infirmities increase. For the kind proposal, of which you are the bearer, and the earnestness with which you seem inclined to press it, pray give and receive my best thanks."

She paused; for the bare idea of leaving her old relation had filled her eyes with tears; and Ardourly gazed on her, now, with admiration of her sentiments as well as her beauty. " I will not press any thing that displeases you, but, still, I must lament the

disappointment your answer will occasion our good friend, Invercraig."

"Tell him," said Jessie, ashamed, and smiling at her tears, that in all things else he may command me—provided he sends another messenger: for, I protest, I shall be ashamed to see Mr. Ardourly after listening to so much of his calumny."

"I shall, undoubtedly, deliver the latter part of your message, for so great a disagreement on our first acquaintance is not likely to be the forerunner of much harmony; and so, to prevent a reconciliation, which might be productive of a great many disagreeables to us both, and a great many long Brachenshaw rides to myself, I will wish you good morning—'nursing my wrath to keep it warm.'" With this he playfully drew the scarf from his bosom, and then more care-

fully replaced it. Miss Colraith's colour rose high, and as quickly receded. "Tell me," she said, "where did you find that scarf?"

"Truly, I fear to tell you, unless you will promise not to indict me under the black act for keeping unholy company; but, since you look so anxious about it, I will even confess that I obtained it from a sibyl, who foretold, that whenever I restored it to the lawful owner, my heart would accompany it. Will Miss Colraith kindly assist me in the discovery of the lady?" But he soon saw that she was really agitated, and hastened to tell her the true circumstances under which he became possessed of it; not without some surprise at the earnestness with which she treated the subject. She listened with eagerness—"That scarf—I had lost it—it was my mother's—She leant her head upon her hand

for a moment, and, when she raised it, her countenance had gained a constrained composure. She smiled, but her smile had more of pain than mirth in it. "And so I find Mr. Ardourly a follower of cunning women! of course, he went to hear what destiny was in store for him—what lady was sighing in secret, and by what valorous deeds she might be won?"

"I went about a much less important matter; and one which required much less skill to satisfy me, but I was only successful in obtaining that valued relic; of which, however, I must not monopolize the whole credit, but content myself to share it with my friend Kenneth; whose humble genius, I fear, you have patronised to a dangerous extent—and now, farewell."

"Let me repeat to you, Mr. Ardourly, that I am much indebted to you for both

the objects of your visit—and—and, perhaps, you may not nurse your wrath so long but that, when you next come this way, you may call, to form a better opinion of Mrs. M'Kay."

"And a worse one of Miss Colraith, I hope; or I shall never return to Invercraig." With this polite speech he was wheeling out of the room, when an unlucky Cupid (for the statues and pictures abounded here as in the other apartment, though they displayed less *natural* beauty) received such a salutation from his foot, as quickly caused him to vacate his pedestal with the loss of both bow and quiver. Ardourly looked aghast; and Jessie's dark eye sparkled with amusement. "If," said she, "the little god has not his revenge for such an insult I shall, indeed, be surprised."

"Alas," replied Henry, he is revenged

already ! but what is to be done ? I fear I have less wit to repair the damage than awkwardness in causing it."

" Do not be uneasy—I assure you Mr. M'Kay will consider the little fellow much more valuable from the accident. He looks considerably more antique and precious than he did. My poor father (as I am used to call him) has not the taste he once possessed in these things—Look round, and see the numerous tokens of returning childishness—like an infant, he must imitate all that he sees ; and in such a way ! Here are partly the results of a visit to the elegant drawing-room of Invercraig. The tables adorned with festoons of chandelier drops ; the bits of painted glass in the windows, the baubles and play-things in every direction ! All these are insurmountable reasons why I should not leave him entirely in the hands of strangers

—I have learnt all his ways; to humour all his whims; and, indeed, I have learnt to love him sincerely. When it shall please Heaven to take him, I shall feel a void in my heart which I dread to look upon !”

“ Whenever that event takes place, I hope the proposal, of which I have been the unsuccessful bearer, will meet with less opposition—Farewell.”

They parted without more words; and Ardourly mounted his horse with a palpitation he had never felt before; and a consciousness that his stay had been much longer than it ought to have been.

The way passed unheeded, for his thoughts were employed on too interesting a theme to attend to the beauties his eyes occasionally glanced on; and the necessity he had been under of belabouring the quadruped he had brought from Edinburgh, had made that ex-

ercise so habitual to him, that his high-met-tled steed brought him, much within the hour, to the gates of Invercraig.

“ My dear Sir,” said he, “ I am charmed beyond belief, and disappointed beyond expression! never did I see a creature more lovely or more uncomplying.”

The Laird jocularly admitted that the result of the embassy was no other than he had looked for, considering the prudence of the young lady, and the appearance of the ambassador. Nevertheless, there was no reason to be appalled; for a woman was surely to be won in a fortnight if a man was to be caught in half an hour; and his failure was, in reality, a matter of congratulation, as it would afford an inexhaustible source of amusement for his idle hours, in contriving interviews, and eluding the jealous vigilance of Mrs. M'Kay; of which he would have

been deprived, had his wishes been gratified in Miss Colraith's change of residence.— Henry still thought that the latter arrangement would have been preferable, but promised to take advantage of Mr. Ayrton's suggestions without delay.

CHAPTER VI.

'Tis now the raven's bleak abode ;
'Tis now the apartment of the toad ;
And there the fox securely feeds,
And there the poisonous adder breeds,
Conceal'd in ruins, moss, and weeds ; }
While, ever and anon, there falls
Huge heaps of hoary moulder'd walls.
Yet time has seen, that lifts the low,
And level lays the lofty brow,
Has seen this broken pile complete,
Big with the vanity of state : }
But transient is the smile of fate !
A little rule, a little sway,
A sunbeam in a winter's day,
Is all the proud and mighty have
Between the cradle and the grave. DYER.

THE next morning Ardourly awakened himself by humming a little air, to which Kenneth had written the following scrap :—

Oh, thou art very young, and very lone
And pale, and meek,
And ling'ring sorrow sheds a pensive tone
Upon thy cheek !
'Tis like the shadows of the eve, that meet
With gentle chill,

And make the wilding blossoms, all so sweet,

Breathe sweeter still.

But thou complainest with a softer sigh

Than infant sleep ;

And smilest—oh, so patiently ! that I

Could gaze and weep.

The waves will glide more bright where rocks are bare

And desolate,

And thy young soul becomes more purely fair

For thy bleak fate.

It would be a pity, he thought, that so fair a creature should be denied a comforter ; and so deep was his commiseration, that, though he rose with an intention to shoot, he, unwittingly, arrayed himself in boots and spurs. There was too much trouble in rectifying the mistake, and he determined upon a ride, though, from his silence on the subject, it is likely he was undecided as to the direction of it. The horse, however, chose to take the course he had been the day before ; and the rider, finding, at last, that he

was far advanced upon the road, thought it would be no harm to call at Brachenshaw to express Mr. Ayrton's disappointment at the rejection of his offer.

Miss Colraith, he was informed, had walked out to the Gleneldie ruins, about half a mile distant, and thither he directed his steps. The path conducted him through a low and gently-ascending coppice of hazel and groundling ash, canopied in many places by the loftier and more delicate branches of the weeping birch. Years had elapsed since the tangled grass and intrusive boughs had been restrained in their luxuriance, and they now almost obstructed the passage, conveying a melancholy idea of the change from former days, and the cheerless existence of the present orphan possessor. There was once a road, and a well-trodden one, to the Tower of Gleneldie; there was alms for the poor,

hospitality for the stranger, and protection for the oppressed. The only being who was now heard rustling through the foliage was the timid maid who sought the hall of her fathers to hear the winds whistle through its ruined walls, and shed the tear of meekness on their mouldering fragments.

With thoughts like these, Ardourly emerged from the coppice, and found himself within a short distance of Gleneldie. A bold range of the Grampians reared their giant heads in the clear blue sky behind it; and the Dee, and its beautiful valley, lay extended in the front, fading more and more tenderly in the distance, till the enthusiast might search in vain for the undistinguishable horizon.

The broken parts which remained were indicative of a former magnificence, such as Ardourly had seldom witnessed, in the rude-

ness of Scotland's early architecture. A lofty archway which formed the centre of an outward wall, and a square corner tower, were the most perfect specimens; the latter of which was laid open on one side, and shewed an interior black and scathed by fire. Having passed within these, the eye was appalled by the sight of the principal building, about half of which was still standing, and presented a most frightful object of violence. The broken sides but too clearly shewed that they had not yielded to the infirmity of their age, but had bowed to the systematic battering of a more ruthless enemy; and the smoky hue of all within, bore lamentable testimony to the means used for its utter desolation. It was difficult, from its present state, to form any idea of its former shape, of which the magnitude was alone to be ascertained; but the variety of antic forms.

which it assumed—pyramids inclining as if in the very act of falling—huge arches apparently supported by nothing, and high and fantastic windows, in which nothing but the heavens were discernible—was more interesting from its confusion, and afforded ample scope for the imagination to fill up the spaces, and connect the tottering extremities, according to its pleasure. But Ardourly had speculations still more interesting than these. Every echo of his footstep, as he entered the ruin, fell heavily upon his heart; for he trod on the hearth, of whose violation his own father had been the instrument, and how could the dark eye of Jessie behold him in such a place? He thought several times of going back to Brachenshaw, and awaiting her return; but when he had come to a final resolution of doing so, it was too late. Having proceeded through several scorched

apartments, he came to the large arched door-way which admitted him into the great banquetting room, the walls of which, though much broken, were still sufficient to exclude the broad day-light. It was a mournful gloom; but strikingly contrasted by the streams of sunshine which fell obliquely through the long narrow casement niches, like golden rafters which had dropped from their horizontal position. The ground was strewn thickly with the large grey stones of which the building was composed, and which had dropped from their lofty places, even like the years of their exiled lord, unmarked and unlamented—save by one. There were also many rough specimens of disjointed sculpture piled up in various places by the hand of chance, but so overgrown and defiled with the accumulating earth, that they formed only the thrones from whence, unmolested,

the rank nettle might wave its dusky dominion. It was before one of these that the fair form of Jessie was bending in pensive contemplation. He could not turn back, as he had thought to have done—in no situation could she have bound him more immoveably to her presence—though he felt that in no situation could he have been an object of less pleasure. He had not stood long before he was gratified by another glance of those dark eyes which had never left his thoughts since he first looked upon them. Jessie started at perceiving her unexpected visitor, with a blush not unmingled with pleasure; and Henry found, to his satisfaction, that there was no immediate call for the excuse of his second appearance: indeed, it is not very improbable that, from a feeling something like agitation, he had forgotten it.

“Mr. Ardourly,” she said, “has more

charity than I could have ventured to give him credit for." There was an effort at gaiety in her manner, but the traces of tears were in her eyes.

"And why," returned Henry, "should I have been denied the credit of seeing where I could be most happy?"

Jessie smiled, and shaking her head, replied, that there could be little happiness with the forlorn damsel of Brachenshaw. "But it is not my intention to make you a sharer in my foolish reveries. Such entertainment is but ill suited to a visit, from which, in consideration of the distance you have come and the goodness which brought you, you ought to derive nothing but pleasure. Perhaps you will let me lead you to more lively subjects of meditation. Nay, I am used to walk without assistance, but, lest I should be a sufferer from too much obstinacy, I will not refuse your arm."

“ Alas, I have too much reason to share in the thoughts which occupy your solitude.”

Jessie turned upon him with a look of reproachful kindness, and delicately avoided a reply, by hastily quitting a scene which caused such painful reflections. It was long before either of them thought their ramble had been sufficiently protracted, and, when they arrived at Brachenshaw, they perceived that their acquaintance had imperceptibly advanced far beyond the usual growth of two days. Jessie's spirits had gradually resumed their usual standard, and even attained to something beyond it; and, as they entered the house, she bade Henry congratulate himself that his next visit would, perhaps, be more amusing, as it would probably be received by Mrs. M'Kay. “ How could I,” she said, “ have kept you in suspense so long, when I ought to have known

your anxiety to hear of her ! If I were not aware of the long ride before you, I would ask you to stay and see her, for I expect the party this evening."

"Then the best advice I can give, is to let me conduct you to Invercraig before they can arrive."

"You remind me of another piece of forgetfulness. I have said not a word on the subject of our kind friend's proposal, though I am conscious I did not say half enough yesterday. But I have written him a note, of which I know you will obligingly be the bearer."

"Undoubtedly ; though I would much rather be the bearer of yourself. Particularly as the looks of such a companion would ensure me a safe journey home."

"I hope your safety has no need of such a feeble assistant."

“ I do not know. I am strangely menaced ; but I know of no enemy I can have made.”

“ If I thought you had one in Scotland, I should be very much alarmed.” She turned to him with the note, for which she had been some time searching a drawer, and the stooping attitude had brought a colour to her cheeks which made her look more bewitchingly than ever, while she added—“ I think I could answer for it that you have no ill-wisher in Scotland, and are not likely to have any. But you must take care of yourself amongst our disturbed hills, for the sake of your friends and—and acquaintance, for I fear I must not yet hope to rank amongst the former.”

Henry ventured to press her hand at parting, and was gradually raising it to his lips, when it was hastily withdrawn to present

him with the note which still lay upon the table. "How can we be so forgetful," she said, "here is my commission."

"Let it remain; it will be an excuse for me to call to-morrow."

"If you want an excuse, you will have a much better one in a civil inquiry after your friend, the bride."

"Most true; I shall be all anxiety till I am assured of her well-being." He was more cautious this day in his progress out of the room, and, to Jessie's admiration, mounted his horse without causing any dilapidation whatever.

He had staid so long, that it was again necessary for the Laird's trusty steed to put his best leg foremost; and hill and vale vanished quickly by him. His spirits were high as the mettle of the animal beneath him, for he was flushed with admiration and

hope, and a thousand visions of future happiness flitted about his breast. In this mood he continued for half his ride, when he slackened pace to breathe his horse, and took the opportunity of looking at his watch to ascertain if it were possible to reach Invercraig by the dinner-hour. As he returned it to its place, his eye caught the corner of Miss Colraith's letter sticking out of his waistcoat pocket; and, as every thing from such a hand was interesting, curiosity prompted him to examine the address. He gazed on it long and intently, with a mixture of doubt and surprise, and replaced it in his pocket, biting his lips with sudden inquietude. In a moment, it was re-produced, and again replaced, and the horse was permitted to saunter along at his own pleasure, while his rider was involved in a deep fit of abstraction. The first glance at the writing had shown him the

strong resemblance it bore to the billets of his mysterious adviser, and was followed by a train of circumstances which he was astonished he had not noticed before—namely, the dark and, seemingly, involuntary expressions of Miss Colraith's guardian, in whose hidden reasons for them she might fairly be supposed to participate; the subsequent discovery of her knowledge of the old woman, Kitty Rankie, whose son delivered the last note; and her great confusion at it. He rode a considerable distance conning over these corroborative facts, and the more he pondered the less he doubted that he had fixed the letters upon the right author; which point being established, the question was what must be the connexions of a young lady by which she could come at such information, and what must be her obligations to them which made such conceal-

ment necessary in the communication of it. It surrounded her with a perilous mystery ; and he turned, with impatience, to the fairer side of the question. Had he seen any thing in her manner which would authorize such a belief as he entertained, or heard any thing but what tended to raise his admiration in the highest degree ? Must not the cause of the advice he had received three days before, still exist ? and, if so, was it likely that she would be less anxious for his safety, now that she knew him, than she was before she had ever seen him ? He hoped not—yet she had not only omitted to give him any further cautions, seeing how little he regarded the former ones, but had told him she did not believe there was a person in Scotland of whom he need be apprehensive. This reasoning Ardourly thought as conclusive as the former, and, when assisted by his ardent

endeavours to acquiesce in its justice, finally dispelled the disagreeable sensations which had so long retarded his journey. He again breathed freely, (though he still thought the coincidences which favoured his first belief very remarkable,) and his gallop was resumed to save his distance at the dinner table.

He had not gone far, however, before he was accosted by a cavalier, meeting him; and he instantly recognised the good-humoured officer who had assisted him in the discussion of the game-cock at Glenshee. The young men were happy to meet, and entered into a friendly conversation, in which the soldier did not deny that his short experience of a Highland life had materially altered his opinion of it. "Though I should have liked it better," he said, "had I come

on more honourable duty, or could have quartered myself on old M'Kay yonder. Report speaks of his hundred and fiftieth cousin as a being who rivals the planets, as bright and as near to Heaven. I have peeped about the ancient fabric every day, but to no purpose. There is no getting a glimpse at her."

Ardourly felt an inward satisfaction at his own superior fortune. "And how," he asked, "did you come at this information?"

"Oh, every Goody-two-shoes in the country is full of her!—I 'faith, I think the best plan for an introduction is, to apply to her as a reduced gentleman. We had the devil's own fortune to miss her at the Spital the other day, for she had been there all the morning to see a sick old woman."

Henry turned his eye quickly on the

speaker, the lines on the window immediately recurring to his mind, while the latter continued :

“ By-the-by, you have not forgotten the man who found his way into our company that night? I verily believe he was the identical person who landed from the privateer, and that I frightened him with his own description; for, the next day, he was again seen at Kinkairn, from whence he took a horse which he left at a small fishing village, north of Aberdeen, and beyond this he cannot be traced.”

“ How, may I ask, did you learn all this ?”

“ Why, when I got to Castleton, I found, accidentally, that he had been seen about there for some days; nobody knew him, and the accounts I had heard, added to what I had seen, induced me to follow him. I

lost him, however, at the place I mention, and have little doubt he went on board the Frenchman, which is still on that part of the coast."

Henry contracted his brows for an instant, and observed it was very strange; adding, "I wish you had been more successful. If chance or duty calls you towards Invercraig, let me see you. I ride against time."

They turned their horses in different directions; and Henry had heard enough to furnish an ample store of unpleasant thoughts for the rest of his ride. "She knew no one in Scotland disposed against me—why no—she said true enough—the person was gone—the person I suspected. He has been living near her too—close by her—and she alone!" Thus was all his reasoning in favour of Miss Colraith, overturned in a moment. He considered her proved to be the writer of the let-

ters beyond all controversion, and again asked himself what must be her connexion with that man, that, being in possession of such information, she should screen him from detection. Could he be any thing less than her lover? and could her conduct be occasioned by any thing but a dread of his attempts upon his (Ardourly's) life, to ensure to her and himself the inheritance of the Invercraig demesnes? In this happy mood he arrived at home.

The bell for dinner had not yet rung, and he retired to his room, well pleased to steal there unobserved by the Laird, for he knew himself to be too much perturbed, at the time, to appear otherwise, and was desirous that what had transpired should be confined to his own knowledge; so jealous was he that any one else should think ill of the fair Jessie, though he was compelled to do so himself.

CHAPTER VII.

Believe not what the landmen say,
Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind;
They 'll tell thee, Sailors, when away,
In every port a mistress find.
Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
For thou art present wheresoe'er I go. GAY.

AS Henry descended, the heavy duett of a brace of bells announced the dinner, and the coming of Captain Raleigh, whom he hastened to meet with as unclouded a brow as circumstances would permit.

“Your friend is in season,” said the Laird as Ardourly passed him—“Heaven send he may bring you good news from Brachenshaw, for, as I think, you have not been there to-day.” A speech which was uttered with a

lurking expression of humour, which inferred not exactly the same meaning.

Raleigh had every reason to be satisfied with his reception at Invercraig, and soon found himself quite at home with its worthy owner, who, as soon as the wine and whiskey were introduced, desired to know how his journey had speeded from Edinburgh. It had, indeed, caused him much amusement; the Laird laughed and rubbed his hands, and even Ardourly, absent as he was, could not help enjoying the whimsical history; which, however, we are sorry we cannot give in the humorous words of the narrator.

From the Scots capital they were to proceed homeward the day after they landed, but the old family vehicle, which was to convey them not coming in time, and when it did arrive, exhibiting the dolorous effects of an upset, they were under the necessity of

submitting to the decrees of fate, and the extortion of waiters, till the damage could be repaired. During this delay, the old gentleman did not forget to make good use of Raleigh as a crutch to assist him to pawnbrokers and picture-dealers, and a judge to direct his purchases; and the veneration his abilities were held in, from the numerous rarities he discovered, made his opinion absolute in all things whatsoever.

But not thus did he rise in favour with the Lady of Brachenshaw. She never could see two young persons together without feeling an extraordinary curiosity to observe what they would be doing, and since in the present instance, her conjectures of a commencing attachment were not far from the truth, she was, of course, not less upon the *qui vive* than usual. The vigilance of the sailor was quite as active, and never

did fondest lovers or veriest foes inspect the movements of each other with more minuteness. But, in defiance of her behaviour, which was not always the politest, there was quite sufficient in Miss Grey to reconcile him to trifles, and more particularly so when he reflected that a patient endurance of such ills was the best revenge for them.

“How happy I shall be to see our charming young friend Mr. Ardourly,” said the good lady, “he really has not his equal. Some people are so vulgar and boisterous !”

“My dear Madam, I beg pardon for doing such violence to your delicate nerves. I will make love to your niece in a whisper.”—He kept his word, while the over-obliging aunt was tortured perfectly to his satisfaction.

At length the lumbering family machine, with four stout posters, drove up to the door of the hotel. The first concern was to see the safe package of Mr. M'Kay's treasures, which Raleigh took care should *only* leave room for the new-married *folks*, having for himself and Miss Grey planned a ride upon the box. But, as soon as this arrangement was made known to Mrs. M'Kay, she launched her thunders against it most determinately, vowing that if Mr. M'Kay did not leave his pictures and rubbish to go by a cart, she would seek another conveyance. The naturalist grinned, and begged she would please herself; she was welcome to stay behind; but, as for his *papiliones*, which had cost him so much more trouble to obtain, he could, by no means, suffer them to travel under any auspices but his own. The lady did not easily yield up the point,

but, when she found the case was hopeless, she declared that, rather than the fine skin of her niece should suffer from too great an exposure to the air, she would herself accompany Captain Raleigh on the dickey. Such a manœuvre was totally unexpected, and the brave Captain was in utter despair. Fortune, however, had no such misery in store for him, for, as soon as his persecutrix had climbed to her rickety station, it was found that she occupied considerably too much of it to admit a companion. She was accordingly assisted down again, expostulating with her spouse upon the necessity of his taking the box himself, or desiring Captain Raleigh to find his way as he could. The old gentleman replied, that the advice might be very good, though he could not follow it. In the first place, riding on the box did not agree with him ; and, in the

next, the Captain had joined their party by her own invitation, and she must abide by the consequences. For his own part, he thought him a good lad; and if he was a little daft, he certainly had a decent knack at caricature, and, moreover, an excellent taste in painting and whiskey. In fine, Raleigh gained his end, and as soon as Emily, who had stood a silent and blushing spectator of her aunt's discomfiture, was handed aloft, the ancient rumble-tumble dashed down the Union-street with a rattle that attracted universal notice, displaying the flaming family arms, emblazoned in about the same compass as those of an achievement. A specimen of the fine arts, supposed to be touched off by the owner himself, from the peculiar satisfaction with which he contemplated the lookers-on.

As soon as the equipage had cleared the

town, the drivers were desired to proceed at a more moderate pace, for the thumps and bumps, with which they had bounded over the stones, agreed so ill with the arts and sciences, that they began to tumble about the ears of the inside passengers without merey. Whether this ill stowage was a plan of Captain Raleigh's is unknown, but he certainly derived much satisfaction from it, since it would make the day's journey two or three hours longer in the accomplishment, and, consequently, give him as much more time in his siege upon the heart of Miss Grey. Mrs. M'Kay, at first, caused some little interruption by obligingly poking her head out of the window to see if they were comfortable, and to tell her niece she might give Captain Raleigh more room ; but having two or three times, by such movements, committed sore dilapidations on the can-

vass and glass cases, she was recommended to desist from her kind solicitude, with an assurance that the lad and the child Aimlie would make themselves quite comfortable enough without her assistance. Thus was a fair field presented to the address of the valorous Captain, who, sailor-like, forgetting all base considerations of money, and all cold calculations of the produce of nothing put to nothing, manfully pushed the war up to the very gates of a proposal, and boldly ventured therein. The timid girl became pale and agitated, and entreated he would not press the subject.

“I cannot; indeed I cannot, let you talk in this manner without my aunt’s knowledge!”

“Shall I ask her permission? I will jump down and do it in a moment.”

Emily laughed in the midst of her distress—
“And much good would you gain by such

an application! Besides, I am not aware that my behaviour towards you would warrant such a one."

"Well, never mind; we are in the country where these things are settled very cleverly, and it is my intention to marry you against your inclination, (which, of course, will disarm your aunt of all wrath towards you,) and then I will make my own peace with her when I have nothing else to do."

His gaiety set her terrors at rest, for it spared her the confusion of a more precise confession, from which she had feared there was no escape—

"And forth they pass, a well consorted pair."

marking each mile they travelled by some fresh advancement in the sentiments they dared not discuss.

At every stoppage Mrs. McKay did not

fail to read her niece a lecture upon some new impropriety in her conduct towards Raleigh; begging, at the same time, to know the whole history of their conversation, from beginning to end. Such an examination, from such a quarter, might be expected to produce equivocation; but Miss Grey, though mild in the extreme, possessed a spirit which would not brook the everlasting inquiries of injurious suspicion, and merely answered that when Captain Raleigh used conversation which she conceived it improper to listen to, she would take care to inform her. The temper of Mrs. M'Kay, with all its pestering qualities, was, luckily for those about her, not easily ruffled, and, besides this, she was so proud of her protégée's beauty, that she had made it a rule never to be angry with her, or allow her to experience a moment's uneasiness, lest that prime qualification should

be injured. From Miss Grey, therefore, who really loved and despised her at the same time, she did not scruple to apply to Raleigh himself; and here, indeed, she was much more successful, for our sailor chose to amuse himself by avowing much more than had really happened.

“ Can you think, my dear madam, that, seated so long by so much perfection, I could help feeling and expressing the effect it had upon me? or can you fancy that the numberless comparisons you have been polite enough to draw between my friend Ar-
dourly and myself (always giving me the advantage) should not have weighed with the sensitive heart of a young lady who sets so much value upon your judgment? I should have called myself the veriest blockhead if we had not plighted our faith long ago. Upon my word, I do not know but we are

married already—a man never knows when he is married in Scotland—a wink or a whisper, they say, is quite sufficient. But if you will allow me, I will ask Miss Grey what she thinks of it, and either expedite the ceremony, or, if it is past, kneel down and implore your blessing.”

Mrs. McKay had just wit enough to perceive that he was laughing at her, though she doubted not that he had gone great lengths. She represented that her niece was very young, and expressed a piteous hope that he would maintain a proper regard for her inexperience; adding a long-winded compliment to his discretion, and finishing with a desire to know how her beautiful Emily was thought of by Mr. Ardourly.

“Thought of, madam? why he thinks she is just made for the wife of a sailor.” And thus did their conversations generally end;

with amusement on one side and vexation on the other.

Having brought them safe to Brachenshaw, (where he saw a young lady, whom he allowed to be almost as beautiful as Miss Grey herself), Raleigh was obliged to wait till Mrs. M'Kay had penned an invitation for his friend's company to dinner on the earliest convenience; which same compliment would not, perhaps, have been extended to himself, had not the old man interposed his commands to that effect; in consequence of an affirmation on the part of the sailor, that, with a very few touches of the pencil, he could convert a full length likeness of that respected gentleman, mounted on a gallant grey, into an admirable representation of Death on the Pale Horse.

Henry bungled through his scarcely legible epistle with the most bitter complaints; for the kind lady had crammed in so many

inquiries after his health, so many praises of her niece, and so many *et ceteras*, that he despaired of giving her an answer under three sides at least.

“ And now, my good sir,” said he, addressing Mr. Ayrton, “ since I am going to make my escape, to arrange with Kenneth for our shooting to-morrow, I hope you will enjoy your laugh at me before I return ; for I must needs confess, that I left Brachenshaw to-day, just before Raleigh, and the rest arrived there. Perhaps, I should not be so candid, if I had not, like him, brought a letter from thence.”

“ A letter ! and from Jessie Colraith ! no wonder you kept it so long in your pocket—Come, Captain Raleigh, let us drink to his amendment—You bear your misfortunes like a man, but my young chieftain there is crazed already !”

Ardourly vanished, leaving the two to their

laudable toast, while he climbed the spiral staircase to Kenneth's abode, which was situated, as poets' should be, at the top of the tower, with only the inconvenience of being just under the clock. In the midst of his small apartment, and surrounded by the heterogeneous implements of both his avocations, sat the uncompanied inmate, "framing loose numbers," and polishing the lock of his gun. Henry desired he would not disturb himself, and taking a seat opposite to him, said he had come to see how geniuses employed themselves.

"I am afraid, Master Henry, you will see little worth the trouble of climbing that cork-screw staircase. You find me nursing my only hope—that some of my fancies may be breathed in my living ear by lips that I love, and some survive for the harmony of the mountain side when the bard is forgotten."

“ Alas, Kenneth, why is the sombre mood so peculiar to the sons of song? Is it really, as your own words express it, that

They soar so far above their fate,
The joys which all the world is wooing,
Are seen in such diminished state,
They do not think them worth pursuing?”

Kenneth felt pleased, and proud that Ardourly should think his lines worth repeating. “ The sentiment,” he said, “ was only a poetical fiction, for, as far as regarded himself, he had every thing to make him happy. Those of his fanciful calling must not be judged from appearances, for they were buoyed up with ideal delight, while their real situation might be poverty and misery, and they were sunk in despondency in the midst of comfort. They were the persons whose fortunes they recorded—the favoured

lover, the triumphant chief, or their opposites."

Kenneth and his poetry being sufficiently discussed, Ardourly came to the point which had really brought him; and begged, in an off-hand manner (that he might not attach to the request an importance which would excite curiosity), that he would go, the next morning, to Loch-na-Gar, and use his best discretion to obtain more satisfactory communications from the old dame. There was, however, no need of the trouble, for he had met her, that day, trudging northward, with her whole household goods upon a donkey. Knowing Henry's anxiety, though not the cause, he had again examined her relative to her son, but to no purpose; nor could he find whither she was moving, though he supposed it was on an expedition to some neighbourhood where there was more to

purloin. Thus was Ardourly obliged to return to his friends, with the conviction that the circumstance foremost in his mind must, probably, remain a mystery, unless Jessie Colraith herself should choose to explain it.

The post was just come in, (a matter of some moment where it came but seldom and irregularly,) and all three became busily engaged with their letters.

“ What says my friend, Sandy Anderson, merchant of Aberdeen ?” said the Laird, as he broke the last seal. Having glanced it over, he handed it to Raleigh, saying it was more in his way, as it related chiefly to his own element. It was, indeed, a disastrous catalogue of losses by privateers, which frequented that coast in greater abundance than ever; but the damage occasioned by all the rest was, comparatively, trifling to the dar-

ing and dexterous mischief perpetrated daily by one individual. This was a corvette of the largest size, which, from the promptness it displayed in intercepting almost every vessel of consequence from that place, was supposed to have agents on shore, from whom it received information as to their course. It was the same which, some little while since, was seen to land one of its crew, and had long been an occasional visitant in the North Sea, having, three years before, fought a smart action with Captain Raleigh.

“ From which,” said Raleigh, “ we separated by mutual consent, to bind up our splinters, and lost sight of each other in a gale of wind, before we could re-commence. Provoking, to be aground when there is so much prize-money afloat !”

But just as he was lamenting his hard for-

tune, Atdourly, who, in a reverie about his friends in England, or his friends at Brachenshaw, or on board the privateer, was swinging the post-bag to and fro, unexpectedly tossed out another letter, which Raleigh caught up, and found addressed to himself. "Egad," said he, "it looks as if it came from the Admiralty—Suppose it should be an appointment to a ship!" To his surprise and delight, he had supposed rightly; and, by his own merit, and the exertion of friends, was once more

"To move the monarch of the peopled deck,"

whither he was to repair in the course of the ensuing week.

Considering his weighty reasons for remaining a little longer in Scotland, this order for his return, which was so neck and neck with his coming, was, indeed,

rather unopportune. But Raleigh was of a very comfortable disposition, and never disdained the happiness in his power, was it ever so brief. The whole joy of a life, he said, was mostly collected by snatches, and none could pretend the blossoms were less sweet because they were gathered singly. With this maxim he arranged with himself, since he could command but one visit to Brachenishaw, to make it as pleasant and convenient as possible. He would go there, as invited, and sleep there, as uninvited; make merry with its old master, and love to his new niece; and then, being ten miles on his road, pursue his journey to the south, with love behind and glory before him.

CHAPTER VIII.

If with the breathing of the gentle winde,
An aspen leafe but shaken on the tree,
If bird or beast stir'd in the bushes blinde,
Thither he spurr'd, thither he rode to see.

FAIRFAX'S TASSO.

No longer seek him east or west,
And search no more the forest thorough ;
For wandering in the night so dark,
He

LOGAN.

ON the appointed day the young men appeared at Brachenshaw, and were received with pleasure by Mr. M'Kay and the young ladies : the civilities of Mrs. M'Kay being, as before, confined to Ardourly, on whom she lavished her welcomes so plentifully that it was clear she was ignorant the thicker such daubs are laid on, the more easily they

are seen through. It is but just, however, to observe, that if her understanding was not more bright than usual, the want of amendment was not wholly without excuse, as the treatment her husband had adopted to effect a favourable revolution had, without impugning its possibility of ultimate success, reduced her to a very deplorable state of mental as well as bodily exhaustion.

Her first *entré* upon her new premises had been marked by as many fractured victims as the march of a conquering leader. The long dark passages which had been so dexterously threaded by Ardourly, were not always to be travelled with impunity; for, as Mrs. M'Kay very properly observed, statues are the most awkward people in the world, and never make way for any body. Alexander the Great was the first to impede her progress, for which Alexander the Great got

his neck broke, and the full force of her charms was received in the arms of Julius Cæsar, who, staggering with his insupportable happiness, bore down the stately figures of Brutus, Cassius, and Mark Antony. As soon as this merciless massacre was made known to Mr. M'Kay, the only culprit upon whom he could inflict punishment was found guilty of being too heavy and too clumsy and too dull of perception, and sentenced to a regular course of medicine.

Now it must be remembered that Mr. M'Kay's taste for natural philosophy had superseded his occupation of chemist and druggist for at least two years; and that the large stock of pills and mixtures which were then manufactured, had, from the want of patients, remained upon the shelf of his laboratory ever since. The intended reduction, therefore, of Mrs. M'Kay's ponderosity pre-

sented a most delectable opportunity of clearing off these existing insinuations against the skill of their composer ; and though the draughts might happen to be a little fermented, and the pills something allied to the substance of marble, the constitution to which they were to be applied rendered the consideration of such trifles wholly unnecessary. Mrs. M'Kay submitted patiently to the discipline of calomel and black doses, expecting to walk forth from her room with the grace and agility of her niece ; but the remedies had not long been conveyed to their destination before their effects cried out for the assistance of others to counteract them. The whole of Mr. M'Kay's knowledge, and the half of his physic, were brought into action ; the patient, in her own mind, growing worse and worse, and, in his, better and better, till, being scarcely able to leave her room, their

opposite opinions pronounced her, at once, in a dying state and refined feminine health.

In this woeful situation Ardourly beheld the Lady of Brachenshaw, who, seating him by her side, entered fully into the detail of her unprecedented sufferings, which were, without doubt, to put an end to her valuable life, unless he would exert his interest with her husband to obtain for her the care of her own recovery. This was a very arduous point, for, though Mr. M'Kay's medical abilities had slumbered for the space of two years, certain standing regulations had existed in his family ever since, and were, in no wise, to be resisted. The first of these was, that all persons of full habits and florid complexions should abstain from all diet but vegetables, porridge, and rain-water, which, in spite of stench and tadpoles, was collected in a little lake on the house-top, and defended

on the unassailable authority of Celsus himself; so that Mrs. M'Kay's petition for roast beef and port wine promised to share the fate of petitions in general, which are thought very unreasonable till the objects of them are past profiting by their success.

Mr. M'Kay listened to her complaints with his usual grin of satisfaction, and vowed that, so far from adding the beef and port to her bill of fare, he had been hesitating whether, in her particular case, it would not be better to strike out the porridge. As for the objections to the medical treatment, they were totally unfounded, seeing that he had followed, to a grain, the prescription of a very wise physician, who expressly says "*Initio sumat æger pilulam unam pro dosi, mane ac nocte; postea sumat binas, dein tres et denique augeatur dosis quantum fieri potest.*" To be sure, the doses, like the Battel gun-

powder, had been made triple strong, but they had only been proportionable to her size and constitution, and, therefore, he did not conceive she had any right whatever to be discontented.

There is no knowing how long the altercation might have lasted, had not the spectacles of Mr. M'Kay been directed towards the garden, where they observed the sportive evolutions of a fine crimson moth, flapping his wings from rose to tulip as leisurely as if he had never heard of a naturalist in his life. The old gentleman immediately sounded to arms, and, seizing his butterfly net, rushed out to the chase, followed, before Mrs. M'Kay could pronounce her veto, by Raleigh and Miss Grey.

The Lady of Brachenshaw desired Ardourly would fly to take care of her niece; but, as Miss Colraith was not of the party,

he excused himself on the ground of her being sufficiently protected already ; affording the good aunt, by the manner in which he gazed on the fair Jessie, another excuse for the envy, hatred and malice, she had entertained from the first moment she had beheld her.

Jessie was indeed a most enviable being, for she was the only one at Brachenshaw who was considered fit to be trusted to her own management. Nor was this all the favour she experienced, for the whole of Mr. M'Kay's treasures were committed to her charge, and consequently his whole heart and soul were wrapped up in her. The bride expostulated strongly against the propriety of her exclusion from these nicest cares of her household ; but received no other satisfaction than an assurance that she was quite unfit for them, and had only been made the

mistress of Brachenshaw by an accidental slip in the memory of its master, who had forgotten that it already possessed a much better one. A piece of information which caused an abrupt wheel of the person of the offended party, and the dispersion of a whole festoon of chandelier drops, which had formed the glittering decoration of an old card-table, and now offered an occupation for the innocent cause of dissension.

Ardourly still dwelt upon her singularly sweet countenance, now kindly intent upon repairing her old guardian's baubles, and now listening and replying, with smiling complacency, to whatever the ill-nature of his wife could suggest for her mortification. Was it possible so gentle a creature could merit the unfavourable opinion of any body? Was it possible there could be a mind for clandestine intercourse with a look so seem-

ingly undisguised and innocent? His purpose was to reveal to her candidly the whole subject of his thoughts; and, whatever her answer might be, to believe in its truth with unhesitating confidence. But Mrs. M'Kay, unhappily, had eyes to distinguish her beauty, though she wanted the honesty to allow it, and very properly opined that too great an intimacy between them would not tell much in favour of the desired establishment for her niece; so that the time for bringing to pass the said explanation was very precarious.

In the meanwhile the dinner was announced, and Miss Colraith, leaving the room to summon the fly-catchers, favoured the lady of Brachenshaw with a choice opportunity of ascertaining the precise bent of Ardourly's inclinations.

"For my part," said she, "I do not think

that Miss Colraith half so pretty as some people have described her; and, as for accomplishments, she is not to be named in the same day with my charming Emily—What think you?”

“ Why, madam, you have scarcely had time to form a proper judgment. In my mind Miss Colraith is highly accomplished, and a finished beauty.”

“ La, do you think so! well, some people have one taste, and some another.—She is much too pale for me; and her hair is too black—and—and—in short, she is not one of my beauties at all.”

When the cloth was removed the conversation turned upon Raleigh's departure. Satisfied with the assurance of Miss Grey's predilection, he was contented to leave the rest to the fortune of war; convinced, that should he be successful, there would be little

difficulty in effecting a change in the sentiments of the aunt. At present, however, this latter personage did not express any very great share of regret at his approaching loss; which, indeed, was no small ingratitude; for, at the hazard of falling into disgrace with his best friend, the Laird, he had not only supplied her with clandestine bits from his own plate, but had absolutely smuggled down her throat a brimming glass of double-distilled whiskey. Mr. M'Kay was more friendly, and indulged in the patriotic consolation of his mountain spirit, till, as on a former occasion, his various sciences were floated from their lurking places, where the greater part of them had lain forgotten, and danced the Highland fling upon his brain, with most outrageous confusion.

“Come lads,” he cried, “*fiat mixtura*;

"Now, singing, I will I know the very
 song which I have heard of in
 the west—I know the name of it—
 'The Song of the West.' And I'll tell you
 a little—when I have got your hands and
 as we will sing in your time in yellow
 robes and with golden chains around
 being that the melody is a long tale,
 and means a story something like this—
 'The Song of the West'—and then you
 will—when you—Oh, no, and then,
 you know the child, Jennie, will sing us a
 song."

Jennie was aware that the better she sang
 the worse she would please Mrs. Mackay,
 and earnestly transferred the task to Miss
 Grey, who, whispering to the rest, that she
 meant to have a laugh at her aunt, imme-
 diately sang the following words with the
 most touching sweetness:

The dark weed hangs over our desolate home,
Like a death-pall where honour is closed in the
tomb;

And it seems as it whispered in sighs to the air
All the tale of the woes that have planted it there!

The chill drop that falls from its cold, clammy
wreath—

How deep it hath worn in the stone underneath!
So the one ceaseless thought which these ruins
impart

With the chill of despair hath sunk deep in my
heart!

The singer was commended by all; but Mrs. M'Kay was in raptures. "What beautiful words, what a delightful air! was it composed by Handel or Haydn, or Milton or Shakspeare? I think, Emily, your taste is much improved of late."

"I am very glad of it—I have gained much instruction from dear Jessie Colraith."

“Indeed, Miss Colraith is ~~much~~ more likely to be instructed by you. After all the advantages you have had of the first masters, I am sure she will not think of entering into any competition with you.”

“Certainly there is no competition between us, and you will say so yourself when I tell you that the composition in which your excellent judgment has united the names of so many worthies, is wholly the work of my sweet Jessie, in compliance with my wishes this morning.”

No one delighted more than the Laird of Brachenshaw in the ridicule of his wife; and, he took every occasion to show off her ignorance and narrow-mindedness to the best advantage, perhaps, with the view of teaching her to conceal the former and amend the latter.

“Well my Lady,” said he, “how is it to

be? Is Jessie to be a Handel, or are you to be a goose?"

Mrs. M'Kay adjusted herself in her chair, without any decided preference for either of these alternatives.

"Why, I suppose, Mr. M'Kay, a person may be mistaken without being an absolute goose. I do not profess to be so *very* good a judge. I said the music might be rather pretty, but I dare say I was wrong. With Emily's voice it might deceive any one."

Miss Colraith smiled sweetly, and perfectly agreed with her; but Mr. M'Kay followed her up pretty sharply, and it was happy for her that he did not retain the wit of his younger days, or, with such grist for his mill, he had found amusement for the rest of the evening. But he was unable to keep his mind long to one subject; he generally, as he did now, talked himself into a

passion, and then forgot where he was; the person who undertook to remind him being at full liberty, (that is, without danger of discovery,) to put him upon whatever track he pleased. This successful plan was first discovered by Miss Colraith, who delivered it, like the girdle of Venus, to the new-married lady; and, though little gratitude was shewn for the favour, it proved to be a talisman which often helped her out of very awkward dilemmas. The talisman, however, had considerable difficulties to encounter on the present occasion; for, as often as she attempted to lead her spouse from the point, Raleigh whispered him back to it, and the joke served as a high treat till the entrance of tea put an end to it.

The hours passed away. Raleigh, as he had determined, had procured a lodging at Brachenshaw for the night, and was to set

out on his return to England in the morning ; but Henry was expected to sleep at Invercraig, and was fearful of causing alarm by remaining. Jessie's distressed countenance pleaded hard for his stay, but he was compelled to resist ; and, after this, it was not likely that his purpose could be changed by Mrs. M'Kay's vehement invitations to a bed, or her horrific descriptions of the dark, stormy night. He pressed the hand of his friend cordially ; said he should feel much anxiety to hear from him, and mounted his horse.

Ardourly had much difficulty in picking his way, for the road was rugged, and the night most dismally dark. The wind howled round him in a hurricane, and the crashes of the old firs, which he passed through to the Dee ford, frequently made his horse start from the beaten track, to the imminent

peril of the rider's neck. The river was so rapid and swollen by the rain which had been pouring for several hours, that both horse and man hesitated as to the safety of crossing. Henry let the animal follow his own inclination, and, after snorting and pawing two or three times at the brink, he brought him over, though his utmost strength was necessary to preserve his footing. He wanted no intimation to use his speed, for the strong and sudden gusts terrified him, wherever the road could be deciphered, into a hard gallop. At length, Ardourly found himself in a thick coppice, about midway between Brachenshaw and Invercraig, and was obliged to slacken his pace, and feel his way cautiously. The night, here, was completely black, and he expected every instant to tumble over the trunk of some ancient pine, prostrated across the road by the vio-

lence of the storm. The creaking of the branches not only startled his horse, but more than once reminded him of the anonymous warnings which could not have been verified in a more fitting place. In a sudden pause of the wind, he heard something stirring on the road, but the storm howled again, and he thought it might be nothing but the straggling cattle which had been browsing there in the day-time. Advancing, however, a few paces further, and thinking how ill-advised he had been to set out so late, a voice on either side electrified him with a mandate to "stand!"

Ardourly would certainly have disobeyed, and done as many a hero had done before him, but the reins of his horse were seized, and he was necessitated to hold a parley.

"Who, and what are you?" he said.

The answer made him feel considerably

more comfortable than he had done a second before; for he recognised the voice of his military acquaintance at Castleton.

“ We have met before,” said Ardourly, “ in this spot; and, when we meet again, I shall have no objection to its being by daylight!”

“ Mr. Ardourly!” cried the officer, much surprised, “ How, in God’s name came you here? Since I have been on this cursed duty, I have undergone more perils than in a twelvemonth’s campaign against a French army. The desperation of these smuggling vagabonds is surprising. They are a complete banditti. Here has been robbery and murder in every direction. Last night a cottage was burned because they suspected the owner of giving information against them; and to-night, I have notice, that another in this wood is to share the same

fate, unless we can prevent it. Let me advise you not to be so venturesome again. Upon my soul, you deserved your fright for your temerity. I shall take some of my men, and see you safe home.

They rode together by several small parties of soldiers, whose presence was only intimated by the low, and cautious watch-word, till they cleared the wood ; and, pushing their horses till they got within a few furlongs of the castle, whose tower was just then displayed by the rising moon, the officer said he might now wish his friend good night, and return to his post. Ardourly thanked him for his escort, and entered the plantation of firs which flanked the road on either side, for the rest of the way.

It was still dark, except when the driving clouds permitted a moon-beam to dart

through the foliage; and, as one of these momentarily glanced upon his person, a bullet whistled close to his ear. From the report, the piece was discharged at not many paces. He turned, and beheld three or four men behind him, and, spurring his horse homeward, presently found three or four more in front. There was no choice but to take a small path to the left, which descended to the river, and make the best of his way. The wind sat behind him, and he could distinctly hear he was pursued. There was no tarrying; and his only chance was to cross the water, which, at that place, was not fordable in the driest season, and was now, perhaps, twice the depth of his horse, and as precipitous as a mill-tail. Fortunately a boat (for the convenience of the inhabitants of the small village of Crathie, about half a mile distant) happened to be on

the right side for him ; and, hastily dismounting, and turning the animal loose, in less than a minute he pulled himself across, by means of a rope fastened on either bank.

He would have run down the water's edge and crossed again, opposite to Invercraig ; but Mr. Ayrton dined that day at the manes of Crathie, and he hastened to prevent his returning without proper protection.

His first question, on his arrival, was, whether the Laird was gone ; and, to his consternation, he was answered in the affirmative. He had been gone about a quarter of an hour, and had left the manse alone, having, probably, crossed the river but a few moments before Ardourly, and taken the by-path to Invercraig, by which there was every chance of his meeting with the ruffians.

The minister was a staunch friend, and had courage enough for a soldier.—“ Sandy—Donald! my pistols and the old claymore! Master Ardourly—the double barrel. We are but four, but there is no time to beat for recruits.”

They were all active young men, and were over the river, and in the fir grove, without giving a thought to the odds they might encounter; but there was no opposition, and they arrived safe at the castle-gate.

Mr. Ayrton had not been home, and Ardourly's blood curdled with a horrid foreboding. A strong re-inforcement of domestics was speedily collected, armed with fowling-pieces, and whatever they could lay their hands upon; and every path of the plantation was searched, but nothing satisfactory discovered. They tried to listen, but the wind still raged, and drowned every

sound but the shrill neighing of Ardourly's terrified horse, which galloped wildly through the dubious avenues, and was, at last, taken by its master. He immediately vaulted upon it, and, urging his companions, for the love of God, not to give up the search, set off, at full speed, after the officer, who had, unhappily, left him just where his assistance might have prevented the mischief which followed.

“ For mercy's sake,” he cried, “ collect your men and return. I have fallen in with the villains you are expecting.” The rest was quickly told.

The night passed in fruitless exertion, and Henry, with his companions, returned in the morning to ascertain the success of the other party, which proved to be no better than his own. Exhausted as he was, both in mind and body, he had a fresh horse

saddled, and again sallied forth to make inquiries at the neighbouring villages. Again he returned unsuccessful, and, no longer doubting the dreadful fate of his kind and benevolent friend, flung himself down to rest, with a throbbing at his head and heart as if both would have burst.

CHAPTER IX.

I marvel all this while where the old gentleman has found means to secrete himself. It seems no man has heard of him since.—JOHN WOODVIL—*A Tragedy.*

If that I bear the spirit of a man,
Thou falsely see'st ! Think'st thou I am a beast ;
A fanged wolf, reft of all kindly sense,
That I should do such deeds ?

ETHWALD.

THE agitation of mind, with the fatigue and wet clothes which Ardourly had so long undergone, caused an illness which kept him to his bed for some days ; and, during this time the inquiries and lamentations of the tenants, and the many who had experienced the good Laird's bounty, were unceasing. But, though the whole country testified the greatest sorrow and indigna-

tion for his supposed fate, and the most ardent desire to avenge it, nothing occurred which could, in any way, elucidate the mystery.

The supposition most prevalent was, that the smugglers having seen Henry part from the soldiers by a light which was too imperfect to distinguish his identity, had believed him to be one of them, and endeavoured at a venture to dispossess themselves of an enemy. Having afterwards found his horse, and subsequently met the Laird on foot by the same uncertain light, the murder (if such it was,) might, possibly have been committed under a mistake.

But this was only supposition, and a week passed without any discovery or particular suspicion; when, on looking over the Aberdeen paper for the insertion of the high-reward he had offered, to his utter astonish-

ment, Ardourly cast his eyes upon the following passage :—

“ The extraordinary disappearance of Mr. Ayrton of Invercraig, still remains unexplained ; but, it is hinted that suspicion would not be misapplied were it directed towards those whose interests are most concerned in the event. He is said to have adopted, as his successor, a young gentleman whose situation, if accidental, was peculiarly unfortunate on that mysterious night.”

Ardourly was thunderstruck—“ Gracious heavens,” he exclaimed, “ am I not deceived ? Pointed out as an assassin ! My name made infamous by such a complication of inhuman depravity ! Why did I not listen to the suggestions of my own breast ; and timely resist the offer of prospects to which I had no claim ? How much worse than my worst forebodings has been the event ! My compliance has not only afforded

plausible grounds for the insinuations of this scoundrel, but has indeed, (if it is true that my kind friend was mistaken for me,) been the cause of the lamentable catastrophe I am charged with effecting. Why did I not attend to the warning of my secret monitor?"

This recollection shot a chill to his inmost soul.

"If Jessie Colraith was connected with those from whom my life was in danger, must she not be so with the murderers of Invercraig?"

It was a thought which had recurred to his mind every moment in the day, and, though a short time ago, (when no one but himself was concerned,) her single denial of the letters would have amply convinced him, the event which had come to pass was of too fearful a magnitude to warrant a blind ad-

herence to the same confidence. The supposition of an ambitious lover returned with double violence. That Mr. Ayrton might, in the depth of the wood, be mistaken for Ardourly, was not unlikely ; but that there had been any mistake in the first attack upon himself, he could scarcely be brought to allow. The writer to whom he attributed his letters had been divulged to none, and he resolved to say nothing of it, but retain to himself the advantage of observing Miss Colraith's conduct, unguarded by the knowledge of his suspicions. Still, however, an employment so humiliating to both parties was hostile to his disposition, and he determined first to see what could be drawn from her justice and generous feeling. He would send her the paragraph he had just been reading, and, if she proved cruel and infa-

tuated enough to let his character still suffer for the crime of another, it would then be justifiable to adopt the less ingenuous proceeding.

He was interrupted in the arrangement of his plans by the entrance of Kenneth, who saw with alarm, that his handsome face which had become pale from sickness and sorrow, was much flushed and disordered.

"Master Henry," said his humble, but sympathizing friend, "I hope nothing fresh has happened."

"No, Kenneth, nothing—I was just wanting you to take this paper to your young lady of Brachenshaw. Deliver it into her own hands, and desire her to read the paragraph I have marked, of which she will be good enough to send me her opinion."

Kenneth said there would be no need to.

carry it far, for he had come to say the Brachenshaw coach was on the road, and would arrive immediately,

“It is in good time,” said Ardourly; “do as I have directed you, and say that I will see them all presently, but that I wish first to be allowed a few minutes’ conversation with Miss Colraith.—Can it be,” he continued when Kenneth was gone, “that she has determined to make an honourable disclosure, or am I only to see the indefatigable Mrs. M’Kay come with fresh ardour, to her attack upon the newly-elevated heir?”

He felt extremely nervous at the approaching interview, and the flush which had been raised by indignation had given place to more than his former paleness; while his hand shook to a degree which scarcely permitted him to open a small desk, from which he drew forth a sealed packet just as Jessie

entered. She held in her hand the paper which Kenneth had given her, but it dropped to the ground when she beheld Ardourly. Both were equally agitated, and both were shocked at the appearance of the other.

"Miss Colraith," said Henry, taking her extended hand, and leading her to a seat, "this is condescending much. There are few who would offer me a hand, as *affairs* stand *now*. But, perhaps, you have not yet read the discovery in the paper I sent you?" Jessie spoke not. "Will you not oblige me with your opinion, as to its truth or falsehood?"

She had been struggling to master her feelings, but they could be restrained no longer, and she burst into tears. "Have I deserved that you should doubt what my opinion must be? Oh, think better of me!"

"Enough—you believe I am slandered:"

He watched her wan and beautiful countenance in trembling expectation of what was to follow ; but she only leant her head upon her hand and wept. It was not likely that, seeing so little of him as she had done, and being acquainted with the late event from the time it took place, her tears could flow so fast for Mr. Ayrton, nor was it probable that her short acquaintance could make her feel so much for Ardourly ; and, therefore, he thought her grief could only be deduced from the guilt of those that were dearer to her. Still he waited in vain for an avowal of this nature, and by degrees essayed, by the simple detail of his distress, to speak more forcibly to her heart. His reputation, he said, was stained with the sacred blood of a benefactor ; his acquaintance was a disgrace to all who partook of it ; his life, henceforth, was only given him to be hooted and exe-

crated. How different from his dreams of retired happiness! How different from the circle of the fond relations he had left and lost!

Still Jessie shaded her dark eyes, and appeared not to notice what he was saying, except by the quick rising of her bosom.

“I spoke of my dreams of happiness,” he continued. “There was one amongst them the sweetest and the deadliest. We have met seldom, but there are those whom we need see but once to love for ever. Forgive me if I speak too bold—the wretched must have license. I loved you, and I thought how we two might roam amongst the wilds to cheer the toil-worn mountaineer, while blessings hallowed the atmosphere around us. But it was a dream, and I had not mentioned it but that it never can be ful-

filled, and better shows the extent of my misery. I ask not whether it might not have been so; enough for me—it cannot; for there are those who, in such a case, would not spare even the lovely Jessie! None would believe but that you participated in the means whereby your husband prospered; and oh, I must change much ere I could bear to hear you spoken of as I shall be!”

As he said this, there was, in his voice, a tone of subdued bitterness which might have been supposed to pierce her deeply had it been addressed to a conscious heart; but her agitation had been so great from the first, that, however his words might have been understood, the effect was imperceptible. It was some minutes before she could sufficiently command her feelings to reply to him, and then the gentleness of every

accent seemed to upbraid him for the thoughts he had entertained. Her sorrow for his illness, her comfort for his distress, her mild assurances that none would listen to the injurious reports of his ill-wishers; but those who were beneath his consideration, all assisted to melt his mind to the mood most favourable to her. He saw it was impossible to behold her without dismissing every feeling but admiration and love, and he almost dreaded lest he should reveal the whole of his suspicions, and deprive himself of all future prospect of satisfaction. To keep within bounds, therefore, he came to the business which had been his excuse for desiring a private interview; and he did it the more readily, because it would afford another appeal to her heart.

“When I came to Invercraig,” he said,
“I will grant that my great inducement, or

the inducement for the persuasions of my friends, was the invitation to look upon it as my future inheritance. This, perhaps, was bad enough, and, I dare say, our neighbours did not bate one jot of the usual observations on such occurrences; but I was to blame no further. I came with a full assurance that there were none who could urge the superior claims of relationship. I never knew, till the day before I first saw you, that these claims were possessed by Miss Colraith."

Ardourly broke the seal of the packet which lay on the table and desired her to read, which she did, and found that the whole of the Invercraig property was bequeathed to him.

"That will," he said, "our kind friend insisted upon writing in my presence, and delivering into my care; the property it

conveys is committed to my charge as a means of adding to my happiness, and this intention can only be effected by the performance of what I conceive to be just. In default of a will you would have stood in the same situation in which I do by the existence of one; and, by thus destroying it, I obtain tenfold more satisfaction than I could receive from thrice the possessions of which I divest myself."

He made a motion to tear it, but Miss Colraith started up and seized his arm: "What is it you do!" she cried, "Think you I will ever consent to profit by such inconsiderate generosity? No, keep what our poor friend (whom I regret the more for his goodness to you,) keep what it was his wish you should enjoy, and make me happy by seeing you so." Thus saying, she took the will from his hands, and placed

it in the desk from which it had been taken, locked it, and tendered him the keys.

Her behaviour astonished him, and, for the moment, he believed it would be sacrilege to harbour a doubt of such a mind; but he was prevented from acting upon this hasty impulse by the sound of voices approaching the door. They were the tones of Mr. M'Kay and his wife in round argument.

"Mr. M'Kay, I tell you I must see what they are about. It is highly improper for a young lady to be so long closeted with a young gentleman."

"Mrs. M'Kay, they are doing nothing wrong, and, therefore you can have no satisfaction in peeping."

But, in a trial of strength, Lady Brackenshaw gained the victory, and burst into the room with a great deal of triumph, and very little ceremony.

"My dear Mr. Ardourly, I am so happy to see you—how very ill you look, but I do not wonder at it after your friend's horrible murder. And then that they should say you did it! I should be afraid of seeing his ghost! Pray, was he shot or was his throat cut?"

"Really, madam, I cannot gratify you—I trust in Providence that we shall still hear of him—he may still live, for we have no positive proofs to the contrary."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. M'Kay, with a face considerably lengthened, "I am very sorry—that is, I am very glad you have hopes.—Do not let me interrupt business, I am sure I must be quite as much interested in your concerns as Miss Colraith, although she *has* occupied so much of your time, and so long impeded our journey to Aberdeen?"

"Are you then on your way to Aberdeen?"

“ Yes, to be sure—has not she told you that? I am sure I do not know what she could have been talking about all this while.”

By this time, with the assistance of Miss Grey, Mr. M'Kay had hobbled up stairs, and saluted Henry in a much more becoming and feeling manner than his partner had done, though his consolation concluded somewhat ludicrously.

“ It is a sad thing,” he said, “ to die unprepared; I always feared it would be my own case, for I have ever had some new object of inquiry, or some new piece in hand which I did not expect I should live to finish—But I have resolved to seek no further after I have found out the *Papilio Menelaus*, or giant butterfly of Brazil; and to begin no more pictures after I have completed the daft Captain's design of “ Death on the Pale Horse,” but hold myself in readiness to

jump up behind him—and—and—let me see—ay—and, as I was saying, we are going to Aberdeen to see if our conjectures were right.—”

“ What conjectures, my good Sir ? ”

“ About your health, papa,” said Miss Colraith, looking full in his face.

“ Ay, ay, about my health, lad. For sea air, is it, Jessie, girl ? Come along, we shall have pretty nigh fifty miles to go—there, there ; come along, I say, Lady Brachenshaw, and leave the lad alone.”

It was no easy matter to persuade Mrs. M'Kay to leave the room, and when she was at last dragged off, it was with many assurances that there would always be a bed for Mr. Ardourly at Aberdeen, and that he had better come, or his own throat would certainly be the next to suffer, which would

cause great grief to herself, and break the heart of her niece.

— This unexpected visit was a powerful soother to the perturbed mind of our hero for the melting kindness with which Miss Colraith had come to console him, and the noble rejection of her proper inheritance, which he now hoped he might some day restore by another title, formed a subject of meditation from which his late gloomy prospects arose, as persons are said to have done from the fabled Bath of Beauty, with something of their pristine brilliancy. Yet were the loss of his lamented benefactor, and the injurious reports of his own character, too deeply felt to admit of his exulting in these prospects with the elasticity of an unburthened heart; and he contemplate the future with a sad and oppressive remembrance of the present.

Days and weeks passed, and the Laird's fate still remained unknown. Every post that came brought something to Henry's disadvantage; but though his neighbours began to look shyly upon him, the general sentiment continued to be expressed by neglect only, except in a few instances, where petty malice was allowed the mastery over better feelings.

Yet did not this mistrust prevail amongst the Invercraig peasantry, who could not have loved and honoured him more had he been born their master, and nurtured in their native hills.

He visited them, and attended to their wants with the same goodness of heart they had been used to, and could not have acted more conformably to the system of the late Laird, had he expected him to return to see how his affairs had been conducted. But with

all this domestic attachment to his person, Henry did not find his situation acquire a proportionable degree of tranquillity; though fond of retirement he was not formed for solitude, and there was no friend in his own sphere to banish it. He looked on the pathless mountains, bleak, brown, and desolate, in the dreary commencement of a long winter; and sighed to feel himself a single stranger far from all who could take a natural interest in him; enclosed in a country which was thinly inhabited, and those inhabitants, for the most part, hostile to him and compelled to admit the justness of his warnings by the necessity of taking precautions for his safety.

As nothing, since he had acquitted Jessie, occurred to alter his suspicion of the smugglers; his inquiries were principally confined to them; for they made no secret of

their calling, but only of the outrages incident to it, and the whole of them in that part of the hills were, by the assistance of Kenneth, shortly known to him; but in vain did he venture his person in the hovels of illegal traffic, and in vain seek for the grand confidant and assistant in their mal-practices, the trust-worthy Kitty Rankie, or her invisible son. Sometimes he resolved to look for a comforter at Aberdeen, but again he thought that whilst there was a chance of information he was in duty bound to remain at Invercraig, where he wandered about the castle in grief, discontent, and daily disappointment.

His only amusement was to encourage the simple muse of Kenneth, and speak to him of Jessie Colraith. It was a theme that both were fond of. She had not only fostered the young poet's genius, and rewarded it

with the praise he most loved to listen to, but had comforted and made easy the latter days of two distressed parents. Kenneth felt with the susceptibility of a poetic heart. He loved his sweet patroness, but it was with a feeling as humble as it was hopeless, and pure as a younger sister of religion herself. He only loved to be where she had been, to preserve the flower which had been crushed by her slender foot, and bathe his temples in the wave which had reflected her features. To see her pale countenance catch a beam from the happy faces which had been lighted up by her goodness, and one leaf from the wilding branch of his poesy, wafted on the breath which hailed her bridal day.

Next to Jessie he loved his young master. He saw him lonely and sad, and he brooded on the only means which could complete

their happiness, with an enthusiastic belief that they were both too good for any but each other. To have looked forward to the marriage of Jessie with any one else would, perhaps, have cost poor Kenneth more bitter moments than he dared own to himself ; but when he gained courage to mention the present likelihood, it was with an untroubled brow, and a heart most anxious for its accomplishment.

The subject was canvassed often, and the companions liked each other better as they became further acquainted with their mutual liking for Jessie. The objections which Ardourly adduced from the cruel rumours against his own name were combated with all the arguments which could be suggested by an earnest desire of success ; and, by degrees, gave way, till his hesitating mind consented to follow the dictates of his

heart, and a day was really fixed for trying his fortune at Aberdeen.

As he mounted his horse he pressed the hand of his humble friend with a true sense of his value, while Kenneth followed him with the fondest wishes of his heart, and the best eloquence of his Muse.

And thou art gone! thy mountain tower,
Is lone and lifeless now—
More bleakly drives the winter shower,
More dreary drifts the snow.

The wild wind o'er my head doth hiss,
The only voice I hear,
But, while it wafts thee on to bliss,
I seek no other cheer.

Oh lovely are the lips that breathed
The poet's early lays,
And gentle is the hand that wreath'd
His brow with early bays.

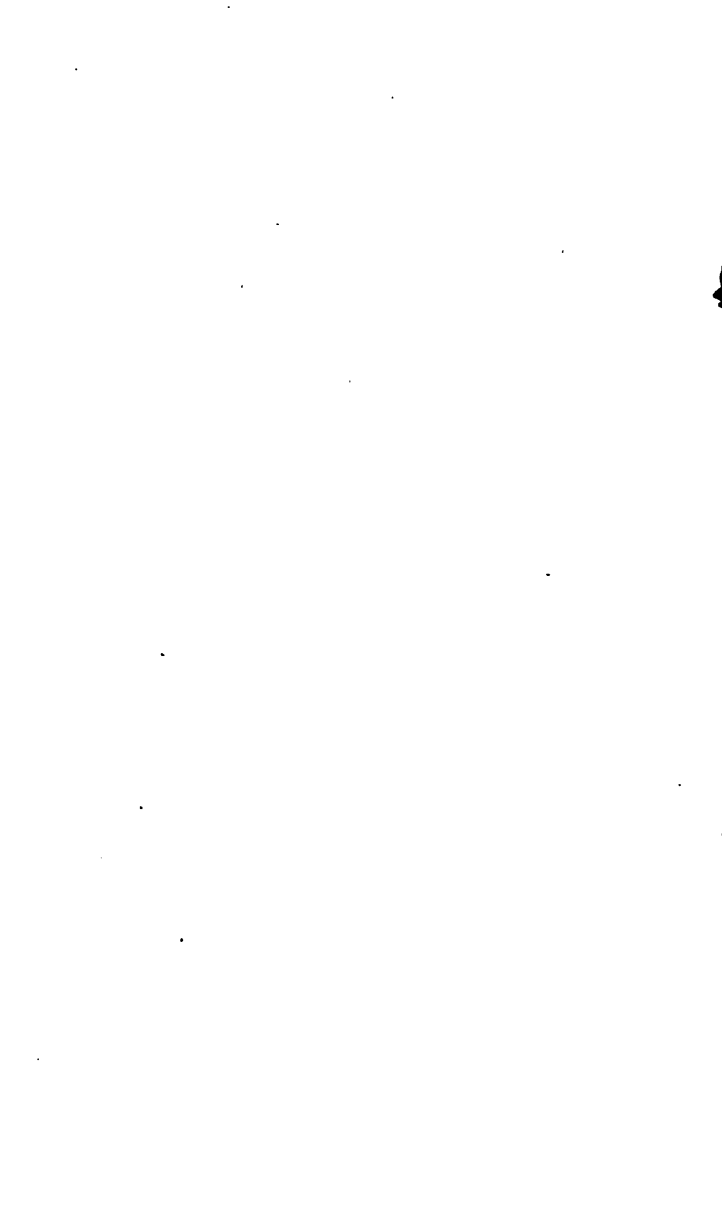
For ever may they lead thee o'er
Where moments gaily bloom,
While every one is brighten'd more
By hopes of more to come.

For me no other joy I'd share,
Than twine her name with thine—
A chaplet ever sweet and fair
That pays her back for mine.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON,
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,
Northumberland-court.

THE PRIVATEER.



THE
PRIVATEER;
A TALE,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Some books are lies frae end to end,
And some great lies were never penn'd :
Ev'n ministers they hae been kenn'd,
 In holy rapture,
A sousing whid, at times, to vend,
 And nail't wi' scripture.
But this that I am gaun to tell,
Which lately on a night befel,
Is just as true as the dell's in h—ll,
 Or Dublin city.—BURNS.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR JOHN ANDREWS,
167, NEW BOND-STREET.

MDCCCXXI.

LONDON.
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,
Northumberland Court.

THE PRIVATEER.

CHAPTER I.

Another's passion
Warm on that lip! another's burning arms
Strain'd round the lovely waist for which I die,
And she consenting, wooing, growing to him! **BUSINESS.**

THE journeys of our hero have so often been followed, step by step, that the common-place adventures of the present one must be left to the reader's imagination; as must the disinterested raptures of Mrs. M'Kay on beholding him, and her long rigmarole of the anxieties and distresses of her charming niece. It was, indeed, a happy opportunity for unburthening her feeling heart, for the young ladies were out walking, and the old gentleman very poorly, having

a *rheumatismus* in one leg and a *crurum dolor* in the other, which had so wearied him with three weeks of sameness, that his love of variety had brought him to a resolution of making the diseases change places. For this desirable purpose he had hit upon a very first-rate experiment; and was, at the present moment, in his sanctum, philosophizing over the *bombyx cæruleocephala*, or Linnæan pest of Pomona, with one leg in a bucket of cold water, and the other in a bucket of hot.

It was not very soon that the good lady indulged Ardourly with a reply to his inquiries about Miss Colraith; and when, at last, she took the trouble to say she was well, it was with a shake of the head, which intimated she could say a great deal more, which might not be quite so agreeable. Ardourly pressed her to explain her meaning,

when stirring up the fire, turning up her gown, and clapping her two feet upon the fender, she thus brought forth the subject of her cogitations.

“ Miss Colraith may be a very respectable young woman. I do not mean to cast any reflections—but her behaviour is certainly very strange—I have long been surprised at her ill looks, and violent fits of tears, and secret communications with Mr. M’Kay; and as he never told me any thing about it, and it is necessary some prudent person should have an eye upon every young woman’s conduct, of course I could not choose but do her this service. The end of my observations is this, that she must have formed some improper attachment; for when young ladies meet persons late at night, and in such situations that it is plain they do not wish to be discovered, I have always held it

a maxim that they can be doing no good. Besides, she is frequently receiving letters by very suspicious messengers—one is an old woman, whom I have heard her call Kate, and another a wild looking man, with long hair and bare feet. With this man she had a long conversation the day before we left Brachenshaw, to which I attribute our journey here, since it was determined all on a sudden. She makes poor Mr. M'Kay do just as she pleases. But I mention all this in confidence, knowing that it cannot affect you in the least."

This speech raised all the tumultuous feelings which Ardourly had well nigh forgotten; but, though it bore a most fatal semblance to the truth, it was evidently dictated by malice and envy, and he commanded himself sufficiently to disappoint her of seeing the effect she had produced. He pre-

tended to believe she had been deceived from beginning to end, and to disregard all the strong circumstances she brought to her assistance, while every syllable was an additional lash to bind his soul upon the rack. His anxiety to confront Jessie with the silent reproach of his still sallow brow and settled melancholy, made him break off his conference at the first convenience; and, expressing his desire to follow the young ladies on their walk, he was well contented to receive Mrs. M'Kay's excuse for not attending him, she being (for what new cause is unknown) under the strict domination of a calomel pill.

The house was situated between the Don and the old town, the former, in which direction the young ladies had gone, being but a short distance through the fields. With very different sensations did he wind along

the banks from those which are usually excited by the contemplation of such scenes. Every choice spot where the weeping birch, now in its wintry nakedness, had combined with autumn flowers to shade and freshen the moss-grown fragment, appeared to him as the rendezvous of Jessie and her secret admirer.

The water too with its hollow pebbly sound, and hurried flashings, had conspired against him, wooing them to its lonely windings, and drowning their passionate whispers with confidential fidelity. An hundred torturing images shot through his veins a complicated tremor of grief, jealousy and indignation, and at every step he felt an increased impatience to meet the beautiful cause of them, with increasing fears that he should be unable to observe the cold caution which was now, more than ever, indispensable.

He had walked down the stream, and was

now within a few hundred yards of the sea, which, however, was not to be seen for the high and circuitous banks, and only gave token of its vicinity by the heavy tumbling of its billows, animated by the squally breath of November. The clouds drove rapidly across the sun, and his path was variegated with alternate gloom and brilliancy, till in a long interval of the former a single ray flashed on a small eminence, rising up from the bank above him. Two small birches at either side of it hung over, and mingled their bare and delicate grace in the middle and underneath these wavering emblems of themselves, their silken scarfs and unconfined ringlets dancing in the wind, stood the light aërial figures of two plaided females. Their faces were turned towards the sea, and the lesser one was looking intently through a glass.

Ardourly soon made himself a path up to them, and stood for a moment a few yards behind. The expanded ocean rolled beneath them. For a moment it was one immense region of lowering purple, enlivened only by the white specks of foam, which, heaving like the sportive flight of the sea-mew, gave a fearful indication of the billows which cast them up. Again a streak of emerald green was shot athwart the gloom, and widening with its rainbow gradations, displayed the stormy battling of all the hues of Heaven. But it was not to the variable beauty of the element that the glass of Miss Grey was directed, nor to the exertions of the diminished fisherman who were hauling their boats upon the smoking beach in expectation of a gale. It was to the distant course of a brig scudding under double-reefed topsails, and bearing more of her heart on

board than she was willing to confess. It was no other she thought than the little craft of Raleigh who had been restored to his old cruise, and now wended his lonely and perilous way for the prospect of gaining the meed her young heart was so ready to bestow. She gave the glass to Jessie, and, as she gave it, drew her hand across her eyes. What would not Ardourly have given to have shared the dangers of his friend, an hundred fold, could it have excited the same sensations in another bosom? But Jessie was lost to him if not to herself, and neither her look nor her voice could again have the charm to deceive him.

Miss Grey received his unexpected salutation with real pleasure, but in the countenance of Jessie there appeared a momentary alarm, though her manner was full of sweetness. She seemed to estimate their

acquaintance, not by its length, but by the events which it had included ; and, had not his ideas been wholly directed another way, he might have fancied a something in her look very different from a want of sensibility to appreciate his conduct in their last interview. Her solicitude was proportioned to his dejection, but he dared not give her credit for sincerity, though the coldness of his manner suffused her cheek with the blush of mortification. "I did hope," she said, "to have seen you in better spirits. I have been ill, and it overcomes me to see those unhappy whom—whom I—esteem."

"Indeed ! Mrs. M'Kay made no mention of illness."

"Perhaps she did not know it. She has not been well herself, but Emily knew it."

"Alas, I did," replied Emily, fondly looking in the face of her friend, and then

turning to Ardourly, "Do you know we have just been talking of you?"

"And I hope you have been talking well of me?"

"Oh, we always talk well of you. But I have been saying I should marvellously like to have a brother, and so I have done you the honour of selecting Mr. Ardourly for that envied station—nay, *it is* an envied one, for I have likewise selected dear Jessie for my sister; so, good brother and sister, I leave you to lament my unworthiness, romantically seated upon this great stone, while I take another peep at yon hapless vessel."

Jessie blushed deeply as her playful companion skipped away, and, between the speech and the blush Ardourly imbibed an idea which till then had escaped him. It was in his power to ascertain in a moment and to a certainty, how far her heart was

affected towards him, and this might form some test as to how far it could be affected towards any other. He had little hope from the trial, but nothing by which his mind could be at all satisfied was to be left unessayed. The current of restrained feelings was rushing from his heart to his head, and he pressed his burning temples scarcely conscious of what he was saying, "you have been ill, Miss Colraith?"

"I have indeed. But may I not ask you to call me Jessie? or must I restrain the freedom of my Scotch heart within the bounds of English decorum?"

"Then for once I will call you Jessie—beloved, perhaps, in vain, while for the first and last time I raise this hand to my lips—Jessie, had I known of your illness I should not have been absent. I would have flown to you through the dead of night."

"Now at last, you speak like yourself.

I thought the noble spirit which I left at Invercraig had turned capricious, and that I was no longer valued."

"No longer valued! I have many griefs to contend with, and my lacerated heart smarts at the touch of every trifle. I have been vexed to-day—no matter how. But you *are* valued as woman has seldom been. I came, Jessie, once more to offer you your own proper inheritance—if you still reject it on such terms, be mistress of it by a title which I dare not name."

"Alas, if I understand you rightly it cannot be—let me still call you my best of friends—nay, that is a chilling smile, and as different from your words as scorn can make it. When I speak as I am compelled to do, it is not without feeling most deeply. Return for a season to your friends in the South, regain your spirits, and, if it pains

you to remember, forget that there is such a being as Jessie, or one who will not cease to pray for you whatever may be her fate."

Ardourly felt every nerve in his frame was shaken. Return to the South! he had disobeyed the advice when it had been good to have taken it, and now it only remained to disobey it again when there was nothing to risk, and much to be regained. He made no reply, but suffered her to take his arm in silence while they walked towards Miss Grey, who had suddenly exclaimed that a boat had put off from the wharf which had been standing to the shore during the foregoing conversation, and was now within half a league. A black speck was really to be seen in momentary glimpses, but it seemed more like the leaping of the porpoise which just raised itself into notice, and again plunged into the bosom of the waters. In a

few minutes its size was increased, and, by the aid of the glass, a man-of-war's gig, with six stout rowers and an officer in the stern, was clearly visible. They approached the beach—none but the bare-brained Raleigh would have ventured to land in such a heavy swell when there was a harbour within a mile of him ; but a bold dash seldom fails of success ; and, resting on their oars till a fine full wave afforded the opportunity, the sinewy crew fairly shot their light conveyance out of the water, and placed her high and dry upon the sand.

“ Oh let us, let us go down to meet him !” cried Emily with undisguised rapture.

Jessie looked at Ardourly with a supplicating anxiety, “ you are not offended with me ?” she whispered “ I could not bear it, indeed I could not. I have but few friends, and it would be hard to lose the best of

them! Will you not lend me your arm? It is your favourite Captain Raleigh."

"Do what you will with me. Friend or enemy must *now* be all the same."

Raleigh experienced all the joy of a successful lover in again beholding Miss Grey, and all the grief of a real friend, in observing the ill looks and unhappy state of Ardourly.

He knew not which to turn to, or what to do, for he felt that he could at the same time laugh with the one and cry with the other. The present residence of the Laird of Brachenshaw had been accidentally communicated to him, and he had come on shore, amongst other inducements, to afford Mrs. M'Kay the happiness of giving him another night's lodging.

"Are you sure of such a favourable reception?" asked the joyous Emily.

"Sure of it! I have got the skeleton of a

sea-horse in my pocket, and if the lady of Brachenshaw will not give me bed and board for a single night, the Laird shall give them me for a twelvemonth."

The bold captain was as good as his word—he found a spare room and an invitation to occupy it, Mr. M'Kay having just taken his two legs out of their two buckets in time to interpose, at the moment his factotum was undergoing a formal "good morning."

Had Mrs. M'Kay been informed that Raleigh's vessel had sunk with him, she would, perhaps, have enjoyed quite as much satisfaction as she experienced from the glittering contemplation of his gold-laced uniform; nevertheless, her chagrin was not permitted to get the better of her sagacity, and her advice was bestowed upon the two young ladies with all the wisdom the occasion de-

manded. To her niece she recommended more prudence than she practised on her first acquaintance with him, and a recollection that it was in her power to have Mr. Ardourly whenever she pleased; and to Jessie, a proper regard for the advantage offered to her, with an intimation, that a young woman, educated in such obscurity, could not hope for a better provision than a captain in the navy.

But the advice was thrown away, and her mortification was only just begun, for Raleigh, in consideration of her many kindnesses, had determined to take her a cruise, and a cruise she was destined to go. "Come," said he to Ardourly, as a commencement to his plan, "you must take a sail with me, a little of our life will mend both your health and spirits. Nay, do not knit your brows, Lady Brachenshaw, I will

bring him back again time enough to be god-father to your son and heir."

His laudable scheme found an excellent second in Mr. M'Kay, who, from the specimen he held in his hand, was stark mad to go fishing for sea-horses. "What was it you said about a sail, lad?"

"Why, Laird, I said I would take my friend Harry, and you too, if you like, and rate you both able seamen. What say you to a little renown in your——middle age?"

Mr. M'Kay said he should have no objection if the weather proved fine, but his spouse vowed stoutly, that after the sufferings of her last voyage, nothing upon earth should induce her to make another.

"Be quiet, my lady, till you are asked; it is only I and the lads that are going, and we mean to leave the girls behind, old and young."

The lady saw how affairs were likely to go, and timely considering that her attack upon Ardourly would lose much of its force, if not followed up without intermission, thought proper to revise her first determination, and stick to him by land and by water. Her demand to be taken was as urgent as had been her refusal to go, and accordingly a birth was allotted to her, though she afterwards took an opportunity of explaining to Raleigh, that she felt herself under no sort of obligation to him. It may be supposed that he was much affected by such great ingratitude, but it did not retard him in his preparations for his visitors, who were assured that all things would be ready for their reception the next morning.

CHAPTER II.

Each curious doubt thou now may'st satisfy,
For here the entrance of a cave we find,
Where dwells, deep hid from day's too garish eye,
A sage whose magic skill can solve each mystery. *Psyche.*

IN the afternoon of the same day Miss Colraith was missing, and Ardourly seized the opportunity of following her. Her usual retreat, he had been informed, was along the beach; and thither he descended, with a fearful hope of meeting her, attended by the person for whose pleasure she had come to Aberdeen—the insidious enemy to her country and the destroyer of her nearest relation. He cast his eyes both ways along the margin of the sea, which had now become quite calm, but Jessie was not to be

seen; nor, though the sand was deep and soft could he trace even the impression of her foot. Still he was unwilling to return, for the red blaze of the declining sun might have induced her to cross the Don Ferry, to which there was a path through the fields above him. The person there had not seen her, but he had only just taken the station from another who was absent, and it was possible she might have passed. Ardently crossed, but the abrupt angles of the rocks prevented him from seeing to any length; and, as the ground became harder and more shingly, he did not expect to trace her. After some time, however, it occurred to him that he had walked fast, and that, from the hour he had last seen her, it was not likely her delicate limbs could have borne her half the distance he had already come. As he turned to direct his steps homeward he

raised his eyes to the rocks, which, though not very high, were, in this place, extremely picturesque. Many of them stood apart from those which formed the regular barrier to the sea, and were scattered, in their isolated strength, like heavy sentinels over the encroaching tide. The sun was almost gone, and a thick haze, which enveloped the dim objects about him, gave a solemnity to the stillness which added much to the caution which looked for a lurking enemy. If Jessie *could* have come so far, there was not a more likely spot for her secret interview. His step became more light, and his pulse more quick, while, striding carefully over the chasms of the smooth shelving stones, rendered more slippery by the damp sea-weed which adhered to them, he reconnoitred round each time-eaten and wave-worn warrior with the elements. Presently his foot

was stayed, and he shrunk behind the shelter of a splintered fragment which interposed between him and the water. At a few yards' distance he saw the dusky figure of a man, who was seemingly employed in gathering shrimps. A moment's examination assured him it was no other than the creature he had so long and so vainly sought—the messenger between Jessie and her lover—the nimble-footed, Wandering Willie. He was rushing forwards to seize him, when a large round stone, which his haste had displaced from its station, rolled down with a startling alarm. Willie leaped from the water, swang his shrimping net over his shoulder, and, dashing his long hair from his forehead, stared wildly about him. Had Ardourly shown himself now, the chances were two to one that, used as Willie probably was to the footing of the

rocks, he would again have been too fleet for him. Once more, therefore, he stepped back to his concealment, while the panic-struck son of the wilderness, taking first a few crouching strides, and then bounding like a roebuck over his glassy path, disappeared in a fissure of the main rock. Ardourly was there almost as soon as the fugitive, whose terror had not even permitted him to be aware of the pursuit, and was on the point of entering, when it struck him that Willie was not over respectable, and there was no saying what companions he might have in this subterranean abode. The interior was tolerably spacious, and as rugged as nature could make it. He proceeded warily along, dreading lest, after all, his purpose should be defeated by the darkness, till he was reassured by a faint light, which issued through a small aperture to the left. Within this were seen the red embers of a fire, which

were newly glowing with the breath of the inmate, who still bore a countenance of terror, and was kneeling in an attitude of preparation for springing up on the first alarm. Henry cast his eyes all round, but no other figure was visible, and he was again in the act of rushing forward, when he was arrested by the sound of a foot overhead. There was an opening in the roof of the cavern, which seemed to answer the triple purpose of chimney, window, and additional entrance, for which latter convenience the shelving stones formed a natural flight of steps, and down these he beheld the figure of a man slowly descending. He was muffled closely in a plaid, but the tone of his voice rang, well remembered, in the ears of Ardourly, and roused all the vengeance which had been nursed by the blood of his benefactor, and fanned by the breath of suspicion against his own honour.

“ My trusty messenger !”

Willie sprang upon his feet, and darted to the opening where Ardourly stood.

“ Stand! heart of hare!” cried the stranger fiercely—“ must you for ever have a halter in your mind? Bring back your shivering carcass. When comes the boat on shore?” Willie answered in something between Gaelic and English, that it would arrive in a few minutes.

“ So—to your rest then, and dream you are hanged—I will await their coming.”—Willie obeyed the mandate, and crawled like a rated hound to some heather spread out in a corner, near the fire, while the stranger stood with folded arms before it. Henry was at a loss how to act—his feelings prompted him to grapple with them both, but a moment’s reflection convinced him that

such rashness would be worse than vain, and he decided upon quietly waiting the event of the scene. It would, in all probability, furnish him with the information requisite to secure his enemy, and the chance was not unadvisedly to be thrown away. As it was, indeed, there was no small risk, for, to hear and see what passed in the inner cave, he must place himself just in the way of those who were to come from the boat, with nothing but the darkness to depend upon. He had not waited long before he heard the rattling of a chain, and the grating of a light keel upon the shingles ; and presently a man brushed close by him, and, passing through the small aperture, bowed low to his stately superior. The greeting was in French, but the one who answered to the name of captain continued the conversation

in English, the other occasionally spoke in the same language, but where he was unable to express himself relapsed into his own.

“ Lieutenant,” said the Privateer, “ Captain Raleigh is again in our reach—we must bring him to action to-morrow.”

“ Bien ! there will be no difficulty in that—he is a dangerous play-mate, as we have found.”

“ Dastard ! art thou fearful to renew the game ? Listen—the boy heeds us so little he cruises with a party of pleasure. There are two who must never return—the Laird of Brachenshaw gets old and childish, and knows too much of me—’twill be but small robbery to make bold with his remaining months. I fear the old man, but not the thousandeth part so much as I hate the other—the upstart upon the lands of Invercraig. Let chance now save him as it did

at Glenshee by the unlooked-for protection, or on yonder night by your own lack of brains, and he will deserve to escape."

" Ah, Monsieur le Capitaine ! je voudrais que vous y eussiez été vous même ! it was dark as Erebus ! "

" I had not trusted you upon such dexterous mischief, but that I was too closely hunted to act it myself—Thanks to the prating soldier who warned me of my dangers, and whose head was as empty as thine.—We must make better work of it this time—to-morrow he will cease to trouble us."

The speaker frowned upon his folded arms, and continued, partly to himself, in a low but passionate voice : " He would have yielded it up to her—Insolent ! and made her an humble debtor for her own. Offers it with his love too ! his love to HER ! No, Jessie ; not even *thy* prayers shall save him. French-

man, yon lady has a guess that we could tell her the fate of Invercraig—hast thou been babbling?”

“ Ah non! but if you speak so plain, here is our friend Guillaume, or Willie, comme on l’ appellent, will make his guesses too.”

“ He!” cried the Privateer. He went to Willie’s corner, and, catching him by the collar, dragged him forward, while the poor unresisting wretch stared in his face with pitiable terror. “ He! this ragged thief! He hath borne buffetings, wanderings, hunger, and misery, for me. Was it for reward? Look on him—he bears little of my bounty on his back. I tell thee, the faith within his flinty heart is worth thy whole nation. Hence, tatters, to your fiith!” He flung him back with violence, and the trembling creature again crept to his bed as he

had been desired. "That poor wild beast," continued the speaker, in a voice softened by the consciousness of having been unnecessarily rough, "has deserved well of me, but my heart and head have been too busy to remember him. Man, he understands us not—he hath no language at all, but roars and signs. But to the point—I have promised her no violence shall be used towards the boy Ardourly, provided she goes not on this party. She stays at home, and thus leaves us full liberty for vengeance as well as sport. We give no quarter—the luckless brig must sink—sink all—perish, and rot amongst the secrets of the deep—for any saved might tell an inconvenient tale hereafter. I shall remain on shore to-night, to watch their proceedings in the morning. As soon as they are under weigh do you send a boat for me. If any alteration takes place,

and Raleigh returns to sea alone, we will leave him, to afford them another opportunity of going."

" Bien ! *je voudrais bien le différer*—there is one other trifle to take into consideration—Monsieur M'Kay has a wife who, perhaps, by this time, knows as much of you as he does himself. If she remains behind, and hears that we have blown up her *bon mari*, *nous l'aurions fait taire en vain*."

" Right, Lieutenant; but she will be with him; if not, it will be a matter to consider.—I shall see them on board and take good note—away to the ship—and remember!" The Frenchman bowed low, and retired the way he came. Ardourly again heard the chain, the grating of the shingles, and the dash of oars. But first he saw the haughty stranger gaze for a moment on the cowering

form of his poor messenger, fling a heavy purse at him, as if he cared not whether or no it dashed out his brains, and vanish through the aperture above.

He was almost stunned by what he had heard. The hopes of a lover are not easily severed, and though racked before by doubts, which, indeed, the appalling concurrence of circumstances would scarcely allow to be such, the positive proof of Jessie's love for another burst upon him with a violence not the less powerful. Her paramour had quitted her but the moment he saw him—quitted her to act upon the information with which he had been supplied by her familiar fondness. It mattered not that she was ignorant of the extent of his villainy—it mattered not that she had sought to win him from it—she loved him, suspected of murder both past and to come—

she loved him, the acknowledged enemy of her country in the vilest way, and henceforth beauty was a cheat, and virtue an imagination! The only joy Ardourly could now look for was in the prospect of the next day's encounter, and he gloried in the thought that Jessie should again guess the fate of Invercraig, and her fettered traitor be produced to reply. He remained in his concealment till the wretched dweller of the cavern had composed himself to rest, and then stole lightly through the still darkness of the night.

When he arrived at home he found Jessie quietly seated in the family circle, and equally surprised with the rest at the lateness of his return. To the inquiries respecting his long absence, he merely answered that he had been further than he intended, had lost his way and been benighted; a

reply, however, which was not at all satisfactory to Mrs. M'Kay, who declared that he could not have looked more agitated had he seen the ghost of Mr. Ayrton. To avoid such inconvenient observations he retired to a window-seat at some distance, and joined carelessly in the conversation which was soon turned into another channel. Raleigh and Mrs. M'Kay were engaged in a violent dispute about the pleasures of the ensuing day. Mr. M'Kay and Miss Grey, for want of other amusement, were aiding and abetting them, and the pensive Jessie slid to the window which was occupied by Ardourly.

“ Why in such sudden silence, my good friend ?—You seem unwell, or unhappy.”

“ And would it be surprising if I were both ?”

“ Nay, what a churlish answer ! Will you

not confide your ailment to me? You have few better friends."

"I have, indeed, few friends."

"Then make the most of them. Let me, at least, have a share in aught that troubles you."

"I have strange forebodings."

"Forebodings! believe them false if they are of any ill."

"They are true—I will tell you one whereby we may judge of the rest. You go not on our party to-morrow."

"Is it possible you can know that? It was settled but the moment before you came in. You could only have guessed?"

"It seems then I am in the habit of guessing right." His manner was short and hurried, and Jessie, silent and mortified, was preparing to leave him, when he caught her hand and drew her back to his side. "Miss

Colraith, I know I must appear strangely altered since the first and happy part of my acquaintance with you. Of some of the causes you are too well aware. There are others which, if you were as apt at guessing as I have proved myself, might somewhat surprise you. But no matter. It is my intention to follow your advice and leave Scotland, which I should have done some time since had I not been detained by a hope that chance would restore my injured reputation, and, by another hope not less ardent but more fallacious."

"Whatever the latter hope might have been, I am glad to hear the former is likely to be less deceitful. Your reputation is as dear to your friends as to yourself."

"My friends are very gracious. Ere I return to England, (which will be in a few days,) they shall be fully gratified; though

I doubt whether they will *all* admire the means." Jessie looked up and found in his dark eye an expression that startled her, but ere she had time to inquire his meaning, he had apologized for retiring so early, and left the room. He was followed by Raleigh, who had been summoned by a significant tap on the shoulder.

"Sit down," said Ardourly as they entered his chamber, "I have some strange adventures to tell."

"The stranger the better—I hate every thing common-place."

"You shall not complain—and, first, how feel you disposed for a meeting with that same privateer you formerly encountered? Are you apprehensive of your strength?"

"No—not if he were a three-decker. But what is to be the end of this? Are we likely to fall in with him?"

“ You shall hear.” Ardourly related, in as few words as possible what he had seen and heard ; and his bold but feeling friend was again at a loss whether to be merry or sad, so equally poised were his distress for Henry’s disappointment in Jessie, and his hopes of a glorious battle the next day. The circumstance which had caused our hero the most perplexity was, how to leave the old people and Miss Grey at home without altering the plans of their wary enemy ; for, with all his anxiety for the promised meeting, he could not once dream of ensuring it by placing them in such a desperate situation. The dashing sailor, however, soon set his mind at rest. He had met this terror of the North Sea before, and was perfectly aware of his power. “ He does not know,” said he, “ that the ship I now command is half as big again as that in

which I so nearly took him before; and, though we are still the lightest of the two, you may make yourself quite easy as to the event. Leave the old people at home! from what you tell me it will be quite impossible; besides, we should lose the best part of the diversion. My brave hunter of grubs will soon want another pursuit; and, as I doubt not his high respect for me will turn his thoughts to the sea, it will be kind to qualify him for a midshipman, at least. As for Lady Brachenshaw she has been physicked and electrified two or three times a-day ever since she has been married, and the sound of our two and thirties will only have the same effect. They shall be stowed out of danger—never fear. As extraordinary good fortune will have it, she makes her precious niece stay at home to keep house with Jessie. No doubt, for fear I should have too many opportunities of

making love to her on board. And now, my friend, good night. You have much need of rest; and let Jessie be forgotten in the dreams of to-morrow's amusement. I shall be on board betimes, to clear for action, and shall return by nine or ten o'clock to bring you off—good night."

Ardourly could not sleep—his cheek burned with a feverish agitation which could not be calmed. His honour, it was true, was in a fair way of being restored, but Jessie was lost to him for ever. He paced the room in this distracted reverie till his foot was arrested by the faint sound of a harp which the minstrel touched as if unwilling that its notes should be heard. It was the hand of Jessie herself whose room adjoined his own, and the air was one of her native melodies which she knew he admired. "No, no, no!" he said, "it is too late to

lull my reason now ! and yet, it is sweetly played. I will listen, to convince myself I am beyond such spells." In a few moments the air was accompanied by her matchless voice, but in so low a tone that he scarcely permitted himself to breathe :

I dreamed I was a spirit blest,
I dreamed my flight was fast,
To gain the meed I loved the best,
For all my sorrows past.

Spring budded in the glen so fair,
And swelled the water's pride,
But then there was a dweller there
More dear than all beside.

And then I thought a spirit's bliss
Were all of little worth,
If 'twere not that of watching o'er
The hearts we loved on earth.

I changed me with his changing mood,
I soothed his mind to rest—
The music of his solitude,
The breeze that fanned his breast.

I was the scent that dwelt within
The snow-drop 'neath his tread,
The softness of the heather couch
Whereon he laid his head.

I was the first of happy dreams
That made his sleep so sweet,
The earliest of the morning beams
His waking eyes to meet.

But oh, all memory of myself
I banished from his mind,
Save that which bade his heart be glad,
Because he once was kind.

I would not have him think that when
All others proved untrue,
I hoped to find a friend in him,
And he forsook me too.

CHAPTER III.

As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death,
And the boldest held his breath

For a time—

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene,

And ————— fleetest rushed
O'er the deadly space between.

“Hearts of oak” our captains cried, when each gun
From its adamant lips,
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse

Of the sun.

CAMPBELL.

AT the appointed hour Raleigh went on shore, and returned with his passengers. The chair was lowered from the gang-way, and the august person of Mrs. M'Kay squeezed into it. The boatswain whistled, and up she went, kicking her heels and shrieking with all her might. The Laird of

Brachenshaw was the next to perform the ascent, and was so charmed with the contrivance, (which, not being used by the smacks, was as novel to him as to his lady,) that by special desire, he was hoisted up to the yard, that he might take a fugitive sketch of the town and harbour, while they were getting under weigh.

The wind was fair, and, in a few minutes the brig was at sea with her course directly from the land—a manœuvre which Raleigh conceived would hasten the movements of his enemy, who, it was probable, would not come on to the attack until he had good sea-room, and a confidence that there could be no interference against him. From what Ardourly had heard, there was every reason to suppose that he was lying close in shore, but the morning mist prevented them from distinguishing, though they knew them-

selves to be perfectly visible by sailing against the sun. The deck was cleared and every thing in perfect readiness; all that remained was to keep a good look-out. Raleigh was all gaiety and confidence. "Now, Laird," he cried, "we'll heave a line over for a sea-horse."

"Ay, lad, ay, as so we will." A line was immediately brought, and, after some little dispute about the bait, the sailor contending that nothing was so likely to catch a horse as a wisp of hay, and the old gentleman, per contra, that the *equus marinus* would be much better pleased with a piece of beef, it was dropped over the stern, and tended by the naturalist with all due solicitude. While this scene was affording infinite amusement for the honest tars who stood round, one of considerably more importance was going forward in an-

other part of the brig. Ardourly had seated himself upon a gun, and was making eager use of a spy-glass. Mrs. M'Kay, of course, could not long suffer him to enjoy this respite from her attentions; and, notwithstanding certain tremors lest the piece should go of, she courageously placed herself by his side.

"I am come to see what you are spying at, Mr. Ardourly—is any thing to be seen?"

"Nothing, madam," replied Henry, without taking his eye from the glass.

"You are looking worse than ever this morning."

"I am sorry for it, madam."

"Really you ought to take a wife, to make yourself happy and comfortable."

"I am both, without one, madam."

Notwithstanding his reserve, his perse-

cutrix maintained her post, while he cursed the tardy cowardice of the privateer, who was so long coming to rid him of his torment, and put an end to the intense interest with which he expected him. At last, after much hesitation, as if doubtful of her powers to bring it forward, out came the mighty business for which the Lady of Brachenshaw had braved the elements.

“ Mr. Ardourly, I wish to have some conversation with you respecting my niece.”

“ By all means, Madam.”

“ I have observed that your attentions have been of a very peculiar nature, and you cannot be surprised that I should request an explanation of your purpose. Of course, you must be aware that you have gained her affections, and that her happiness entirely depends upon you.”

“ Madam,” replied Henry,, who, at any

other time, would have laughed out-right at her ready-made address, "be satisfied with the assurance, that I admire and esteem your niece most highly, and that it is my intention to promote her happiness as much as lies in my power."

"That is just such an answer as I expected from the elegant Mr. Ardourly." She was then proceeding to fix the wedding-day, when their conversation was cut short by a loud laugh round Mr. McKay. He was pulling in his long line with the utmost rapidity, and swearing by Neptune and all the gods that he had caught a horse. "Here he comes," said he, "here he comes—here comes the *equus marinus*," and up he pulled a ~~mac-~~kerel!

The laughter was succeeded by a loud shout. It was the burst of exultation produced by the intelligence of the expected ac-

tion, which Raleigh had, till now, withheld from his crew, of whom there was not one but was as anxious as his Captain to come in contact with the celebrated Privateer. In an instant several of them were on their way to the mast-head, and another huzza broke forth when the first who arrived there waved his cap, and shouted "a sail."

"La, Mr. Ardourly," said the Lady of Brachenshaw, "what is all that noise for?"

"Only that we are going to have an action," returned Henry, leaping from his seat, "you must go below immediately."

But Mrs. M'Kay was not able to go below. The word "action" had paralyzed her. "Take me home again!" she shrieked. "Take me home again! O, Captain Raleigh, I did not come with you to be slain in battle!"

"Neither shall you, my dear Madam," replied Raleigh; "but pray be pacified, for,

if you bring the heir of Brachenshaw into the world just at this time, the noise of our guns will certainly frighten him out again." By force and entreaties she was conveyed below to a place where she might wring her hands in safety. Her concern for herself was too great to admit of any inquiry for Mr. M'Kay; and it was fortunate that it was so, for he was no where to be found, from the the hold to the mast-head, which gave rise to a universal supposition, that he had been hauled overboard by a sea-horse.

It was now about noon-day, and the sun had almost entirely dispelled the vapours. The dwindled outline of Aberdeen was sinking in the ocean, and not a ship was to be seen of any description but that which was just emerging from the distance, and carrying all sail after them.

“ We have none here to interfere with us,” said Raleigh, with his usual spirit. “ We must shorten sail till he comes up, or we may fall in with somebody to share the prize. He carries English colours for fear we should run away from him. I warrant he has our signals too—hoist one, and ask him to dinner.” He was not mistaken—the privateer was provided with every thing that could decoy his prizes or favour his own escape. Several signals passed between them till their distance was diminished to half a league, when Raleigh again carried all sail, and suddenly put down his helm. The vessel flew round like a thing that spurned its element, and rushed towards the enemy amidst that dead and determined silence with which the British sailor goes so characteristically to battle. Henry had the greatest confidence in the courage and skill of his

friend; but had his feelings been less excited, he certainly would have eyed the disproportion of the ships with some little doubt as to the result of the engagement. As matters stood, however, he rather rejoiced at the advantages of Jessie's favoured lover, which would add so much to their triumph, should they be fortunate in taking him. The same feeling was observable in the countenance of Raleigh, who gave his directions with a gay intrepidity which shewed he cared as much for the Frenchman as he did for Mrs. McKay.

When they had approached within a cable's length, the privateer fired a broad-side which made the water shudder beneath him, but without any effect except that of extracting a terrific scream from the *Lady of Brackenshaw*, which was heard all over the brig, and caused a woful belief that glory had dis-

missed her to the skies. But fate was not so cruelly disposed; another broadside produced a second scream which told that the first had not been mortal, and had caused little damage of any sort excepting to the sails, through which several shots had passed and whizzed away with otherwise harmless impetuosity. This random sort of attack was by no means according to the tactics of Raleigh, who chose rather to reserve his strength till it could be exerted with the most powerful effect. He stood steadily on through the long cloud of smoke, and did not give the word to fire till the yards of the two vessels were absolutely in contact. At that moment the matches were applied, and the stunning voices of his two-and-thirties roared through the splintered sides of the enemy, ere he was in a state to give a single shot in return. When the smoke cleared

off they were both standing the same way, and a rapid fire was kept up for several minutes. Raleigh saw his men drop and the splinters fly about him with a conviction that he must gain some speedy advantage, or the strength of the Privateer would prove an over-match for him. His plan was soon formed, and with all the dash and *sang-froid* which was so natural to him. He had fortunately obtained the wind of his antagonist, and shooting a short distance a-head, bore down under his bows with a promptness too sudden to be counteracted. The event was just what he anticipated ; the Privateer ran his bowsprit athwart the deck, and, before he could clear himself, it was lashed to the brig's mizen-mast. " Now, now," cried Raleigh, " we will tow him home with us." Not a gun could be brought to bear upon him, while he swept the opposite deck from stem to stern

with the full hurricane of his raking broadside. The roar was kept up unceasingly, and it seemed that as the slaughter became more deadly, the attempts to cut away the bowsprit were more desperate, but this the fire of the musquetry, though returned with furious activity, effectually prevented, till the success of the attempt could be no longer serviceable. The privateer had become quite unmanageable, and had not a mast standing. The only chance, therefore, which remained to him was to continue still lashed to the brig, which, from the comparatively small damage she had received, was otherwise irresistible. If this could be maintained they were still pretty nearly matched as to numbers, and the facility of boarding might, at last, make a material alteration in the scale. Raleigh saw his aim at once, and, though flushed with the success

of his spirited manœuvre, was in no wise disposed to covet dangers which were unnecessary—but it was in vain he gave the word to “cut away,” for grapelines were thrown with such perseverance that as soon as he was clear in one place he was fast in another, and while one portion of the enemy were thus employed the rest were leaping sword in hand upon his deck. Ardourly had waited with hot impatience to be called into service, and he was now amongst the foremost of those who were receiving the boarders; yet, while bullets were whistling and sabres clashing about his head, the peril and confusion of the moment could not tear his eyes from their steady search for the lover of Jessie—he could gain no glimpse of him; still, however, he must be scarcely discernible in the volumes of smoke, and the first cessation of firing must reveal

him. The firing *did* cease, for, as the scuffle thickened the grapelines were less attended to, and Raleigh, unexpectedly freeing himself from them, stood off with one half of the enemy engaged in a conflict from which, as soon as they saw themselves separated from their comrades, they were compelled to desist. Still Jessie's lover did not appear, he was too cautious to quit his own ship. But this was of little consequence, for, with such diminished numbers and such a shattered and unmanageable hulk, it was evident that he must either yield or be sunk in a few minutes. As soon as the prisoners were properly disposed of, Raleigh again presented his broadside, but was spared the necessity of discharging it—the privateer struck. The event was hailed with a general huzza, breathed with enthusiasm by all, and by many with their last breath. Raleigh

grasped the hand of his friend—"Harry, I have kept my promise ; go you with the boats on board the prize, and see for the man you want—I have a poor ship-mate or two that must have my thanks before they are beyond them." The gaiety of the gallant sailor had ceased with the battle, for, not even the frequency with which he had been a witness to similar scenes, could subdue the kind feelings of his nature. Many a dark red stain marked the spot where a bold Briton's life had sunk into his native oak, and many an active limb that had been strained in defence of it, was floating to a nameless grave.

CHAPTER V.

Go, Fame, an' canter like a filly
Thro' a' the streets an' neuks o' Killie,
Tell ev'ry social, honest billie
To cease his grievin',
For yet, unskait'h'd by death's gleg gullie,
Tam Samson's livin'.—BURNS.

THE unaccustomed scene in which Ardourly had been engaged, had almost bewildered him. The dead and the dying he saw not—he only felt an incoherent conviction that something would now be known of his lost benefactor, and that he should be no longer execrated as the miscreant who had destroyed him: there was also a burning but undefined recollection of Jessie, and he leaped into the first boat with a hollow mirth

like the giddiness produced by a blow. He was the first who ascended the privateer, and was met at the gangway by the same Frenchman whom he had seen in the cave. "Sir," said Ardourly, "you will be good enough to show me to your Captain." The Lieutenant shrugged up his shoulders and bowed low with a ceremonious flourish of his enormous *chapeau bras*. He seemed to consider that talking English would betray the frequency of his visits on shore, and, with many regrets, declared his ignorance of it. "My good Lieutenant," replied Henry, "it is necessary that you should know the grounds on which you stand: we are old acquaintance, and perhaps I shall be recognised by reminding you of our meeting one stormy night in the fir-grove of Invercraig, where you conferred on me the obligation of a shot which missed its destination. If your me-

emory will not furnish you with this, it cannot surely be treacherous to the occurrences of last night, when you met your Captain in a cave by the sea, and planned the attack which you have found so profitable—you remembered me then, and you remembered Mr. Ayrton, and perhaps you will now remember it is in our power to hang you to your own yard-arm—Where is your Captain?”

At every syllable of this home speech the Frenchman thought it convenient to allow his countenance an additional degree of obsequious recognition—he hoped Monsieur Ardouris was perfectly well, and that he would show much civility in the use of his knowledge, as might be obtained by it. “It will depend, Sir,—I wish to see your Captain.”

“Ah, Monsieur,” he replied, “mon pauvre Capitaine est tué! these arms threw him over to the fishes.”

“ Look you, Lieutenant—I do not believe you would dare to say this if he were on board—but whether or no he is killed remains to be investigated. If it should happen that he never came on board, and that this is merely a falsehood to prevent a search for him on shore, the discovery is easy, and the result to yourself very obvious.”

The Lieutenant would willingly have served his commander by a lie, could it have been done without risk to himself, but, all things considered, the truth seemed to be infinitely the best policy. He was soon induced to confess that his Captain, in consequence of an unusual number of fishermen who observed them from the beach, could not be brought off, but as for the place of his sojournment, it was known only to Guillaume Perrant. The disappointment of Ardourly was great—the absence of the Privateer him-

self had destroyed at least half the credit of the victory, and it was possible that, having timely notice of what had passed, he would, after all, effect his escape; nevertheless, there was still one important person in hand, and from the fears of this one there was little doubt of extracting all that he desired to know. "It appears," he said, "that I have prevailed on you to speak the truth; you will be so obliging to continue in that temper and inform me in what manner you disposed of the Laird of Invercraig." "Heureusement!" cried the Frenchman, "mais avec une seule condition—if I produce milord d'Invercraig alive and well, j'aurai un plein pardon."

Ardourly gazed on him with a mingled feeling of astonishment and mistrust—"Produce him and you shall be free as air—but be cautious how you trifle—speak,

man, explain; what is it I am to look for?"

"Ayez la bonté de me suivre et vous serez satisfait." He again flourished his chapeau, and led the way below, the cabin-door was unclosed and Mr. Ayrton himself stood before them! There are some scenes in life which, though interesting to the imagination, are heavy in the detail: the joy—the strange, surprising joy, of this meeting, must be left to the former. So close had been the good laird's confinement, that he had not even known with whom the Privateer had been contending, and his amazement at being informed that he was indebted for his deliverance to his dashing friend Raleigh, was only equalled by his impatience to thank him—all inquiries on both sides were postponed till they could remove to the brig, and they immediately descended to the boat which

had remained alongside. The Laird was the last that stepped down from his captive abode—he turned to take a farewell look, and it was a look of benevolence and pity—what a contrast to the former haughty appearance of the daring Privateer—the terror of the North Sea! Where the splintered remainder of a mast could sustain rigging to catch them, her shattered yards and rent canvass were hanging piece-meal—where another mast was cut close from the deck, they lay scattered in unheeded confusion. The crew stood amongst them in the muteness of despair; some lay across them with the fierceness of clenched teeth and staring eyes—with the harmlessness of that last chill whose stiffening influence reigns the pale monarch over human passions. Some gazed with ghastly exultation as the last dwindling stream flowed from their captive

veins—and some (not the least to be pitied,) were collected together by themselves—these were Scots who had been prevailed on to forsake their native land and join with its enemies—they knew their fate—one country, one crime had united them ; one ignominious death must perpetuate their companionship. As the Laird looked on these—still clad in their plaids and highland bonnets—and marked in each man's countenance the characteristic love for his countrymen, the sorrow for their fate, and the seeming disregard for his own, his eyes filled with tears, and he could look no longer ; he stepped into the boat, and from thence to the arms of his young deliverer. Far different was the scene which he now encountered ; the red vestiges of battle were all removed, and his presence was hailed as an event without which it seemed that the victory would have been no,

thing. The impatience for mutual explanations admitted of few preliminaries; but, as the regard which Raleigh entertained for Mrs. M'Kay, was too powerful to suffer the discussion of such interesting matter without her participation, he proposed an adjournment to the cabin, where she was still in the full enjoyment of all her terrors. They found her kneeling in a corner, with her head bowed down to the ground, and her hands clasped in utter despair. "What ho! Lady Brachenshaw," said the sailor, "we are taken prisoners by an Algerine Corsair, and you are bought for the Dey's Seraglio."

Mrs. M'Kay raised her head by degrees, and discovered the true state of affairs with infinite satisfaction. She first faltered her thanks to Heaven that such a kind aunt was still spared to her beautiful niece, and next entreated permission to staunch the

wounds of the amiable Mr. Ardourly. Henry, however, assured her that the amiable Mr. Ardourly had no wounds to staunch, and, hoping the fortune of war had been equally kind to her Ladyship, desired to introduce the Laird of Invercraig. "The Laird of Invercraig!" exclaimed the Lady of Brachenshaw, "that is utterly impossible, for, he has been dead this long time." Mr. Ayrton said he could not presume to contradict what she might be pleased to assert he *had* been, but that he certainly was not dead *now*; and, whatever detriment the circumstance might have caused to her speculations, she found herself obliged to congratulate him on his resurrection. When this was adjusted, she turned with the full fluency of reproach upon the brave Captain. He had no business to bring her to sea—he had no business to fight—he had no business

to let his guns make such a noise—in short, he had no business to do any thing but take her safe home again. She was terrified—she was sea-sick—she was half dead—“and moreover,” added Raleigh, “the late Laird of Brachenshaw assured me that your Ladyship has taken a dose of *hydrangyri submurias*, strong enough to kill the sea-horse that devoured him.”

“The late Laird!” screamed Mrs. M’Kay, “do you say my husband is killed?”

“Ay, Madam; as dead as a robin, unless he is shut up in yonder closet. Take a peep through the keyhole, and tell us if you can see the glimmer of his brass buttons.”

The tumult made upon the deck by restoring things to their proper order, had prevented Mr. M’Kay from understanding the result of the contest, and he still kept fast the door, the key of which he had taken

inside. Raleigh knocked loudly, and desired him to surrender.

“Hillo, Laird! you are taken prisoner!”

“I’ll not unlock till you give me free quarter.”

“You shall have it, Laird, and now yield up your citadel.”

The chief of Brachenshaw turned the key and boldly sallied forth, but the picture of his countenance, when he saw himself surrounded by friends, would have been beyond even his own skill.

“Eh, lad! what have we taken ’em? that’s well, that’s well—we all go shares in prize-money you know—we fought bravely for it.”

“Bravely—but you seem to have forgotten our prisoner here.”

Mr. M’Kay put on his spectacles, and scrutinized his old neighbour closely, but his memory was too vague to recognise him.

He had seen him somewhere, but he knew not where. But, when he was informed who it was, he considered for a moment, and betrayed strong agitation. "Invercraig!" he said, "then it is as we suspected, and we have been fighting with the privateer. I'm glad to see ye—I am glad to see ye, and I'll take God to witness I had no hand in this, nor any knowledge of what had become of ye."

"I will believe you, my old friend; but still I must lament that you never revealed to me the secret of Gleneldie's existence—mistaken man; I have deserved better from him! My boy, Henry, your gentle Jessie will scarcely believe that her father could act the ruffian on his best friend."

Ardourly sunk upon a chair, and groaned aloud—"Her father! merciful powers! I thought he was her lover—brainless idiot—I reproached and lost her."

"I fear, indeed, that you have; but take with you this consolation—that she was never to be obtained."

"And a very fortunate circumstance it is," said Mrs. McKay, "for it would be impossible for him to marry my niece and Miss Colraith too."

"Hold, hold, my dear Madam," said Raleigh, "your niece is intended for a more worthy husband, or I will positively never put you on shore again. Make up your mind to this—and now let us listen to the Laird's adventures; for Munchausen, I guess, will be a fool to him."

CHAPTER VI.

Indeed, because you are a banished man,
Therefore, above the rest, we parley to you
Are you content to be our general?
To make a virtue of necessity,
And live as we do? *Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

THE reader is already aware that the night which favoured the escape of Ardourly, delivered Mr. Ayrton into the hands of the pursuers; and that these were a party despatched from the privateer. Resistance was impossible; none were within hearing to assist him; for, though he soon distinguished voices calling him by name, the strength of the blast against him rendered it fruitless to reply. This rapid pursuit naturally hastened the flight of his conductors. He was mounted

on a rough highland pony, and escorted through the most remote tracks of the hills till day-light broke upon them, when, halting on a spot far distant from all danger of observation, he found it was their intention to remain till returning darkness should cover the renewal of their progress. In this place he had leisure to examine the bravos who surrounded him, and the sight of their seamen's dresses furnished him with the first idea of his destination. His surmise was confirmed by the Frenchman who acted as commander of the party; "Monsieur," he said, "was going to take une petite voyage, but whither and wherefore he was unable to say; nevertheless, he need be apprehensive of no danger beyond the detention of his person, for the liberation of which he would have it in his power to make terms with his Captain." Such information will be sup-

posed to have been not wholly unwelcome to one who had looked for nothing less than murder, and had only wondered at the length of its delay ; but still it was no reason for an abatement in his efforts to obtain a release. The Laird endeavoured to cultivate his acquaintance with the Frenchman, and, with the offer of his purse, and promises to a far greater amount, deprecated the hard fate which could drive a person of his gentlemanly appearance to such unhandsome proceedings. But Monsieur was proof against bribery and flattery in every shape, nor would he extend his communications one item beyond those he had already afforded. In all things else his politeness was as unbounded as it could have been if their situations had been reversed. He was much grieved that he had no change of linen for milord d'Invercraigue, and he had many apologies to make :

for providing him with such a sorry cheval. He had searched the hills very carefully, and it was the best he could catch. He was also much afflicted at several other inconveniencies to which my lord would be subjected, and which were all caused by the haste of his movements, which admitted of no preparation. These same inconveniencies were, indeed, not less grievous to the poor laird than to his obsequious ruffian; for, in the midst of his indignation and well-grounded apprehensions, the soilure of his silken vestments, and the absence of his toilet and rose-coloured dressing-gown, were calamities which received their full share of lamentation. As soon as the darkness returned, their guide once more conducted them through the intricacies of the desert; and, for the greater part of the night they were descending through the lowlands. The first glimpse of the

dawn was seen in red streaks on the ocean, and, before it had expanded into day, the exhausted prisoner was placed in a boat, and in a short time conveyed on board the ship in which he was found.

He was not left long in doubt of what was to follow. The Frenchman having ceremoniously bade him be welcome, disappeared for a short time, and, to the Laird's utter astonishment, returned with the outlawed father of Jessie Colraith. His countenance, which had once glowed with the feelings of a benevolent heart, was stern, haughty, and even unabashed. "Though twenty years," he said, "though twenty years of exile have fallen like icy drops upon my breast, and chilled the kindlier current, they yst leave enough of what I was to wake the memory of my honoured kinsman."

"And if it ever slept," replied the Laird,

with honest indignation, " I would it had never been wakened to meet, in the last of your house, a traitor to his country, and a violator of ancient friendship."

" Then spare your sorrow, for you behold neither. He who has no country can be no traitor, and he who has fostered my enemies can be no friend. List you, Sir—you are come to hear my history, and comment at your leisure. Some twenty years ago, (for crimes I have yet to learn, unless 'twas that of being more honest than my neighbours) your countrymen banished me from my home. I went forth, a lonely wanderer, to struggle with a bitter world—nameless, for my name was branded—friendless, for my fortunes were ruined—no matter how I fared. I left my wife and child with the dotard of Brachenshaw, who has since been well paid for it—they were

my all; and I returned, by misfortune, more attached to them, and still unshaken in fidelity to your country."

"It had been well if you had continued so,—and well if you had shewn more gratitude to the friend who obtained for your family the lands of which they had been deprived. I never saw nor heard from you."

"But why?—it shall be well explained—I found indeed my lands restored to my family—my family! one speechless infant, whose mother had been hastened to Heaven by a broken heart. Still my lands were restored—I heeded it not; but I thought it friendly in you—I was rushing—despair in my heart,—madness in my brain,—to press your hand with the gratitude I deemed your due.—What followed? Whom did I find the sharer of your board—the chosen partner of your

soul? The man who drove me forth to misery—who beat down the walls of my house, who destroyed my innocent wife—my debt to you was cancelled a thousand times. Once more left the land which I trod with the secret foot of a felon. Years passed away—you thought me dead, and, while you thought it, how often has the same stream gushed before our eyes; the same voice sounded in our ears!—I returned to clasp my child; I was too much forgotten to dread discovery, and I returned as often as I would—It was thus I found that which has brought the Laird of Invercraig to his present entertainment.”

“ Mistaken man !”

“ You became the friend of the man who ruined me—had this been all, you might have continued so unmolested; but think you, I can behold the son of that

man possessor of the lands of Invercraig ?—It is said they are already assigned to him by writings ; you are brought here to invent more just ones ; and to be told that he who has no country has no laws, save those of his own making. I have done—my daughter is your next of blood.”

“ I honour her no less than I pity her de-luded father—I am an old man, and my life or death can be of little consequence to any one. Of your lawless power make what use you will. My word is passed—the son of my adoption shall not find it forfeited. Yet still there is a mode of compromise between us—your daughter is amiable—my boy—”

“ Would marry her ?—First would I toss her piecemeal to the ravens—his life hangs slenderly—be hasty in your compliance with the only terms, or his head, perchance, may come to thank your tardiness—and think,

my good Laird of Invercraig, you have already seen enough to feel some little hazard may attend yourself. When we meet again I come for my last answer."

Colraith finished the conference with a slight motion of the head, which might, perhaps, in present circumstances, have appeared like mockery, were we not to add that even still, after years of rapine, his manner was marked by the semblance of courtesy, though the heart of it was destroyed. After giving a few short directions to his French officer to see that the prisoner was treated with all proper respect, the daring outlaw quitted the ship, and was put on shore as if purposely to expose himself to the fresh dangers which he had created by his late outrage. He was no sooner gone than the Laird was accosted by the lieutenant, who seemed much flattered by

the importance of his charge. "Milord d'Invercraigue was very welcome on board the corvette—he would have the honour to attend milord to his cabin, where every thing had been provided for his reception in the first style—and, he would likewise have the honour to gratify any little curiosity he might feel respecting *son bon ami, le Capitaine.*"

This man had sailed with the father of Jessie for many years, and was enabled to enter much into the minute details of his character. In the early part of his life the bold, adventurous, spirit of Gleneldie had caused him to chose his profession and pastime on the sea. The experience he here acquired in the service of his country, became after his banishment and the consequent death of his wife, whom he loved with all the fiery passion of a heart ever in

extremes, the means of administering to his vengeance against it. He took refuge with its enemies, and to these, as a secret spy, as an avowed adherent, he bound himself for ever. But profit was not his aim—the unceasing fatigues and personal dangers he underwent were sufficiently paid by the troubles and disasters he occasioned. Against his own country only was his hostility directed; and, if ever accident threw a prize in his way, however rich, from any other shore, it was dismissed as beneath his notice, since it did not add to the pride of his revenge. What he seized was divided with his crew, while his own share of the spoil was disposed of in any manner which would be most offensive to those from whom he took it. This carelessness of gain, this fearlessness of every thing, might be the effect of a desolate feeling which told him

there were none to concern themselves in his fortunes but a child to whom his existence was a continual source of misery, yet to his crew it seemed a generosity which commanded their utmost devotion, and he found them ever prepared for his most perilous enterprises. Still he loved but one—all affections had withered in his heart, excepting that for his daughter, whose remembrance was the only ray to chase away the gloom of his features. To reserve to himself the happiness of seeing her—to brave the prodigious hazards of remaining whole weeks by her side—he had cruized within sight of the northern coast—had lain in secret bays within a stone's cast of it, when every vessel upon it was seeking the reward for his capture. His ambition for her was boundless—what she had lost in name should be made up to her in wealth—the

Gleneldie property she had, the Brachenshaw she would have, and the Invercraig she *should* have—the outlaw's daughter was to be a match for a prince.—But this was not to be all her wealth—her mind was to be moulded like her mother's—gentle and beautiful—in abhorrence of the deeds her father lived by, and loving him in ignorance. In dreams like these, he at times seemed almost happy, and the only visible sensation of compunction for the life he followed, was when his child suspected it. He had taught her to look on him with horror; and, whether she did or did not was equally painful, for he must inevitably behold in her either the loss of affection, or the want of virtue.

Such being his love and his ambition, the Laird felt that his little chance of a compromise, such as he had hinted at, was less

even than he had imagined. On a calm examination, however, of the alternatives proposed to him, it appeared that the decision to which he was prompted by honour, and from which he was resolved in no case to depart, was likewise the most eligible for his personal safety, for, he could not doubt that the certainty of detection, and of his doing justice to Ardourly if ever he should regain his liberty, would cause his death to be immediately consequent upon the alteration of his will. Whereas, if he still persisted in his refusal, he would still be preserved in the hope that he might at last comply, and thereby retain the possibility of an escape.

Sad and wearisome was the good man's confinement—sometimes he was tossed by tempests—and sometimes he was lying close upon his native shore—his fate was unknown,

and there were none to rescue him. His unworthy kinsman came no more on board, but learned his temper by other communications, for few can encounter the presence of a good man whom they have injured. Gleneldie had still enough of his former nature to be sensible of this. The Frenchman, like most Frenchmen, continued to be very polite; he attended to his prisoner when he was ill; drank with him when he was well; supplied his toilet with true French luxuries, and told facetious stories of his adventures; but his politeness never extended to an invasion of the faith he professed to his Captain, though his magnanimity in the frequent discussions upon the subject of bribery, made his own hair stand on end with absolute astonishment. Perhaps he was very honest, and *would not* be corrupted: perhaps he was very fearful, and *dared not*. But the

confinement of Mr. Ayrton was condemned to a still greater affliction than its hopelessness. As an argument for a quicker compliance with the terms of his liberation, his subtle detainer supplied him with the public papers, in which his adopted son was blackened with the implied charge of a crime too horrible to think upon. He doubted not that this was a stratagem of Colraith himself, to accomplish the purpose to which he applied it; but still, if it should happen that he could never effect his escape and confute it, it was one to which concurring circumstances must give a most fatal plausibility. To dwell upon the consequences which might ensue, was insupportable. His appeals to the heart of the Lieutenant were redoubled; but in vain; he had no heart, he had only good breeding. The amount of his offers increased in proportion, but with no

better success. The reasons, however, by which the Laird was actuated at first, could not be undermined; and he continued firm in the same course, till he experienced the benefit of it in his joyful and unexpected release.

As soon as Mr. Ayrton had finished his recital, and listened to the different observations upon it, from the heartfelt expressions of Ardourly to the "very odds and very stranges" of Mrs. M'Kay, the attention of the party was arrested by the Laird of Brachenshaw, who, between a great deal of terror at the discovery of his intercourse with a traitor, and some little pleasure at the resurrection of his neighbour, began to flounder through an explanation of his conduct with about the same perspicuity which he observed in his cups. With the assistance of so many to keep him in the right road,

however, he contrived to reach the end of it; and, passing over the episodes of a *Larus canus*, or sea gull; and the *Chrysomela tenebricosa*, or bloody-nose beetle; we will endeavour to give the plain English of the case in our own words.

He had stated that he was ignorant of the outrage committed by Gleneldie, and he had stated correctly. A few days subsequent to it, Miss Colraith was advertised by Wandering Willie, that a strange gentleman was said to be on board the Corvette, but that who and what he was, had been intrusted only to the Lieutenant, and a confidential few—none else were suffered to approach him. With thus much information the Brachenshaw establishment had been removed to Aberdeen, for the more convenient examination of Colraith, who was compelled to remain near his ship, in consequence

of the dangerous observation he had lately attracted. The tidings, however, went no further. Gleneldie appeared highly indignant at the suspicion, though still his indignation could not shake it off; and Jessie was doomed to be the victim of sorrow from three sources at once—from her father's scarcely questionable guilt; from the unknown sufferings of the kind Invercraig; and from the cruel injustice which was overwhelming the man, of whose generosity she had experienced so strong a proof. The information which had been given by Wandering Willie, was all that he possessed. Colraith had deemed his secret too important for the keeping of such a confidant; and, more particularly so, since it was to be so carefully withheld from Jessie, to whom his faith and services were, perhaps, even more constant than they were to her father. This

indeed appeared from the letter which he had conveyed to Ardourly at the Spital of Glenshee, and which, with the previous one, she had been induced to write by the fears which had afterwards proved so well grounded. In extenuation of the many years silence he had observed respecting Colraith, Mr. M'Kay pleaded his kinsman's peremptory desire, and his own ignorance (by reason of his many avocations,) of the outlaw's unrelenting profession.

Mr. M'Kay's oration being concluded, the lady of Brachenshaw thought it incumbent upon her to make one likewise. She commenced by declaring, that the whole story was very much confused, (or that the battle had made her head so, which was nearly the same thing;) and, that she did not understand one half of it. From what she could gather, there had been a great deal

of wickedness, and several persons must and ought to be hanged, though upon whom the lot would fall she was altogether ignorant. Mr. M'Kay would bear her witness that no secrets of any kind whatever had been intrusted either to her or to her niece ; and, she would inform, him that if he had been wise enough to confide in her, her penetration would have prevented all the mischief which ensued. " Lady Brachenshaw," said her husband, whose various sensations by no means disposed him to over-much forbearance, " Will ye just have the penetration to hold your peace, and not make the lads laugh at you just whether they will or no ? There was something I would have asked the daft Captain, but ye have put it all out of my head—will it be something about the action ? ay, surely—did I not hear a body saying that you knew of

it before you sailed, or did I only fancy it?"

Mrs. M'Kay shrieked with horror. "Did Captain Raleigh know that he was going to fight a battle, and bring such kind friends into danger?" Raleigh saw there was but one way to get out of the scrape. "Know of the battle, my dear Madam! I would not have fought that fierce Frenchman to be made high-admiral of the fleet." "Eh, lad, I'm doubting though for all that—and—and, as I was saying, my poor child Jessie—when she hears these things, she will surely break her heart. Give us some whiskey, lad, for I am no just so merry as I should be—poor child—poor Jessie—her father cannot get off—he has no ship to carry him; he will be taken to a certainty."

Ardourly looked in his face—he had believed the old man to have outlived all

the softer feelings of humanity,—and he was pleased to find himself mistaken. “Alas!” he said, “if you knew all, you would have as little reason to be kindly disposed towards the father of Jessie, as I have myself. But still, as the father of Jessie, be his crimes what they will, we must hope that justice will not overtake him” Mr. Ayrton hoped so likewise, provided he paid no more visits to Scotland; and so did Raleigh, who, quite satisfied with the credit of taking them, would gladly have liberated all his prisoners to boot, had not his duty obliged him to act otherwise. The only hard heart of the party was deposited in the bosom of Lady Brachenshaw, who vowed and protested that she hoped that all such persons as Mr. Gleneldie would be hanged, drawn, and quartered, even though they should be the fathers of quite as great beauties as Miss Colraith.

The delivery of her adamantine opinion was followed by a polite message from the French lieutenant, who was desirous of paying his respects in the cabin. His request was immediately granted, and he forthwith introduced his well-bred visage amongst the company.

Mr. Ayrton held out his hand, in token of forgiveness, and Raleigh contrived to muster French enough for a familiar bon jour, with an invitation to the discussion of a bottle of claret. Monsieur took his seat as if nothing had happened to derange his tranquillity, and said, he had merely desired admittance to congratulate le grand Capitaine Anglois, Monsieur Raleigh, on the event of the little dispute between them, and to make his devoirs to Madame la Maîtresse de Brachenshaw; cela lui faisait beaucoup de peine d'apprendre qu'elle eut eu grand peur, et

même qu'elle fut effrayée. Mrs. M'Kay perceived from his facetious manner that he was paying her something like a compliment, though of what sort it might be, her skill in the tongues had not the good nature to inform her. Nevertheless, it was not her custom to make a gratuitous display of her ignorance, and as the gentleman bowed very low, and, in spite of his mustachios, black neckcloth, red waistcoat, and long jack-boots, did not look at all horrible ; she condescended to gladden his heart with a gracious inclination of the head, and an English expression of thanks for his civility. Mr. M'Kay grinned, and winked at the "daft lad" Raleigh—"Eh, Lady Brachenshaw, then you do not know he called you a comical old girl?"

But Monsieur would not suffer such a stain upon his gallantry.

“ Mi lord de Brachenshaw was very humorous, but he was not quite correct—Madame, sa femme ne parloit pas François—he feared his English was not more intelligible, for it had all been acquired in Scotland, and was so enveloped in the accents of that country and his own, that it required beaucoup de sagesse to peel them off.”

As the bottle passed they became still more sociable—Mrs. M'Kay being unable to appropriate the attentions of Ardourly (with whom, indeed, she was somewhat offended on account of his partial mention of Jessie) considered the Lieutenant a grand acquisition, and absolutely invited him to pay her a visit. But, alas! Monsieur shrugged up his shoulders, and expressed a doleful hope that she would excuse him. It would have made

him tout à fait charmé de profiter de l'honneur qu'elle lui désignait, but he believed he had a prior engagement to prison.—“Apropos, Monsieur de Raleigh, what do you think your English laws will do with me?”

“Why, Lieutenant, your friend Lady Brachenshaw says she hopes they will hang, draw, and quarter you; but your greatest danger, I guess, is from Mr. M'Kay—he is mighty jealous of his wife, and you know you have been doing all you can to lead her astray. But, come, fill your glass, and drink King George's health.”

The bottle flew faster and faster—the Laird of Invercraig forgot all that he had suffered, and laughed aloud. The Laird of Brachenshaw got drunk, and sung a duet with Raleigh. Even Ardourly was amused,

though the thought of Jessie and her grief, the thought that she never might be his, still hung heavy at his heart—and Mrs. M'Kay confessed, that the day, considering all things, had turned out very pleasant.

“Vive la compagnie!” cried the French man, as he tossed off his glass. “If I have lost la brave corvette, j’ai soutenu une bonne bataille! mais n’importe.—I will go back à ma patrie and turn tailor. En attendant, we are all grand amies. This world does change very wonderfully—Monsieur d’Invercraigue has obtained his liberty and I am prisoner instead! Mais, aussi, n’importe—Vive la compagnie, et mon pauvre Capitaine! toujours à la santé de mes amis! hurra!” Monsieur was as happy as a king, and, as the sailors phrased it, a little

overtaken with regard to liquor; being, as they anchored off Aberdeen, in the very act of singing

Rule Britannia, Britannia rule de wave.

CHAPTER VII.

Cella. I pray thee, Rosalind, sweet my coz, be merry.

Rosalind. Dear Cella, I show more mirth than I am mistress of; and would you yet that I were merrier? Unless you could teach me to forget a banished father, you must not learn me how to remember any extraordinary pleasure.

As You Like It.

WE must now be permitted to turn from the party whom we left so merrily engaged in the last chapter, and while they perform their moon-light disembarkation, pay a short visit to the young ladies, who had remained on shore.

A day devoted to the society of each other, uninterrupted by the prying curiosity and unfeeling vulgarity of Mrs. M'Kay, was an event too happily appreciated to permit many thoughts of regret, even for the

absence of those who were destined to form the chief theme of their conversation.

“My sweet Jessie,” said the blue-eyed Emily, throwing her arm round the white neck of her friend, “how happy am I to be alone with you! I care not how adverse the winds may be to the return of my good aunt, for I shall employ each moment in seeking out new terms to tell you how dearly I love you.”

“As some of our friends will to tell the young Laird of Invercraig how you love him. Will it not be so, my sylph?”

“I care not if it is—I love him—Oh very, very much, because he loves you.”

“And for what do you love the wild sailor, who has vowed so stoutly that he will leave your aunt on the coast of Norway?”

“Honestly, and in defiance of your arch

looks, because he loves *me*—and, this being answered, tell me, my Jessie, what use shall we make of our holiday? Shall we run off to some far distant cave; and, being all in all to each other, show the base world we can live without it?”

“ Or shall we sit quietly on this sofa till Captain Raleigh is ready to accompany us, and amuse ourselves in talking over his faults in the mean time?”

“ With all my heart—to begin—”

“ To begin then—He wants prudence—to obtain the good will of your aunt is material to the happiness of you both, and he has used every means in his power to confirm her hostility. Few people love to be the butt of ridicule, and Mrs. M'Kay less than any; because (forgive me, dear girl) because she knows herself to be not altogether undeserving of it; yet not one of

her little peculiarities will he suffer to escape him. If he would only let these pass, and bestow a due share of credit on the good qualities which would remain, how easy would it be to win her to your wishes."

"How good of you, Jessie, to allow good qualities where, I grieve to confess, you have never experienced any! Yet think not the poor sailor has it in his power to obtain kindness from a quarter whence even your own virtues have failed to command it. As for his raillery, were he but rich, it would pass for wit, and make him as charming as he now is odious. I beseech you seek other cause against him."

"Nay, I have no other—If this is no fault I must allow the monster to be faultless—but only because his follies are so mixed up with their opposites, that it is beyond my art to separate them."

“Now praised be Heaven that I do not believe you! But, since his vices are so barren a subject, let us see what we can make of the virtues of a certain Mr. Ardourly. He is indifferently well-looking, and, perhaps, indifferently witty—both indifferent virtues. You have told me, likewise, that he has some touch of generosity, the truth of which, however, I shall estimate according to the partiality of the interpreter; and——my sweetest Jessie, I cannot, even in jest, speak lightly of those who love you; for, even as Kenneth describes you,

‘Thou smilest, oh, so patiently, that I
Could gaze and weep!’

“That languid mirth is but the mockery of your heart—an effort to make others happy, while some secret sorrow dwells sadly underneath it. I ask you not concerning it. I know your home is not what it was, and

most dearly do I lament the day which brought us here to make it otherwise, but yet, it is hard to say so, for then I should have missed the sweetest friend that Heaven could bestow upon me.

Jessie took her hand affectionately, "You mistake me—that I have not always the best of spirits I will grant you, but nothing could be more foreign than the cause you have assigned. The trifling crosses I experience occasionally from your aunt seldom cost me a moment's consideration ; and, I have thought myself well repaid for them whenever accident has permitted me to throw in my mite of assistance to the promotion of her pleasure ; but, were they ten times as great, how cheerfully would I submit to them, with such a refuge to fly to as the bosom of my late-known, but dearly valued sister."

" Say not late-known—you are the spirit

I have been dreaming of all my life, and emulously placing in the situation in which I am so proud to find you. Your sorrow then proceeds from some cause which I will not try to investigate. I will only propose a remedy. You must know that I feel such an utter despair of my aunt's persuading our friend Ardourly to fall out of love with you, and into love with myself, that I have resolved upon giving you the magnanimous advice of sparing her all future trouble, by making him happy at once. Would he not make *you* so?"

"I doubt very much whether he would give me the opportunity of judging. His external accomplishments all must know; of his disinterested feelings I have had good proof—but I think him capricious—what else can I think of a man who in the morning is more than kind, and in the evening, worse than cruel?"

“ You are unjust to him, Jessie.—He made you an offer of what he conceived to be your proper fortune—upon your refusal of this, he accompanied it (for though you do not confess it, I gathered it from the words he dropped) with an offer of himself. Think, Jessie, he was smarting under the most wicked insinuations against his honour, and your rejection (unmeant I am convinced it was) might have appeared like an acquiescence in their justice. Promise me that you will use him better.”

“ Alas ! how can I use him better, than deny him a connexion which must be dishonourable to him ? ”

“ And why should the unmerited misfortunes of Gleneldie entail dishonour on the pure hand of his daughter ? This is only a coy subterfuge—Look at me, dear Jessie ; look in my face, and see what a pleading look is there—Let him be happy.”—

“ With *me* he could not be so. Were it possible, and were I certain that the alteration in his manner sprang not from a fickle disposition, why—why, then we would talk more about it,”—“ and now let us take our bonnets, and see what has become of the brig.”

Having walked down to the beach, they found that the fineness of the morning had drawn together rather a numerous assemblage, and these of the better class ; to account for which, the reader must be reminded, that we have brought him to that season of the year, when the drifting snows and whistling blasts compel the lords of the Highlands to forego the slaughter of the muir fowl and famished roe, and fly to the less romantic, but more comfortable, neighbourhood of man. Aberdeen was full and fashionable, to which the contrast of gay

colours, which were now moving upon its beach, bore ample testimony. Every one seemed to find occupation and pleasure.—Some were watching the success of the fishermen employed with their herring-nets; some were curiously collecting shells and pebbles, and others were spying at the brig, whose hull had now sunk in the waves, and whose sails were growing paler in their blue mistiness. On a sudden our two friends were alarmed by a general expression of surprise and dismay, and beheld darting round a point of land scarcely a league from them the hazy outline of a ship, which came none knew from whence. As her rapid course, however, under the influence of royals and skysails, brought her nearer to the sun, the first suspicion was confirmed, and the cry of the “Privateer” was universal. Every other employment yielded in

a moment to the eager gaze at this "thing of life," whose prow was instantly observed to be directed towards its enemy in the distance. Men, women, and children ran shouting and screaming in every direction; some for boats to obtain a nearer view of the action, some for telescopes, and some to spread the news through the town. The confusion increased with the increasing multitude, while the grand object of attraction shot along with imperceptible velocity—her large dark figure and lengthening shadow only appearing in motion from their gradual decay. To describe the feelings of the many—their fears lest Raleigh should be taken before their eyes, their confidence in his tried gallantry, their admiration when he was observed to shorten sail, and their breathless agitation, when he tacked for the encounter, may not be difficult; but to describe

those of Jessie and her young friend, is impossible. In one vessel they had each a lover, and each a fond relation ; in the other, one of them (as she believed) had a father, whom she was now to behold, either in savage exultation over the unhallowed success of treason, or made the captive of offended laws, and doomed to an expiation the most dreadful. A sickness came over her heart, and, but for the assistance of her slender supporter, she would have sunk upon the ground. Not far from where they stood, the sand was terminated by irregular knolls of earth, tufted with grass and other wild vegetation ; and to these the pale girls retired to rest the limbs which could bear them no further, and to avoid the observation which they dreaded might penetrate the secret of their bosoms. They saw the ships meet, and they saw the white volumes of

driving smoke; but from the distance and the opposition of the wind, the sound of the guns was lost. The tongues of the spectators were again let loose; and, as the advantage seemed to fluctuate from one side to the other, the cry was one while "the Brig," and again "the Privateer"—at last the loud cheer broke forth which hailed the triumph of the British Captain. The spirit of Emily bounded with electric joy and she raised her eyes in weeping gratitude to Heaven; but Jessie was silent; her head had dropped back upon the knoll against which she had been reclining, and her cheek was pale and lifeless.—In stooping eagerly to raise her, she found herself assisted by a person of whose vicinity she had not been aware. They supported their beautiful burthen between them; the dark countenance of the plaided stranger, displaying a

complication of turbulent emotions from which, but for the hurry of the moment, which afforded no time for observation, she would have shrunk with affright. He was the first object that met the unclosing eyes of Jessie, who looked but an instant, and with a faint scream of " my Father," flung herself into his arms.

Colraith had beheld the defeat of his lieutenant with all the maddening indignation which so fiery a spirit might be supposed to feel at the failure of his darkly-concerted plans ; yet was it not the failure but the exposure of them which most powerfully moved him ; since, but for this, he might still have remained near his daughter, and turned his mind to other means of making her the mistress of the demesnes he coveted. But now not only was he compelled to fly the country, but barred likewise from the poor

hope of the stolen returns in which he had indulged during so many years : for though he had more than once been a fugitive from the pursuit of those, who, like the soldier at Glenshee, suspected him as a secret enemy, and had, after allowing it a few weeks to subside, ventured back without any diminution of confidence, yet, known, as he now must be, as the outlawed Gleneldie, with all his daring atrocities, Scotland could have no place to secrete him.—He spoke with a voice, composed indeed, but forcibly and fearfully so, while his pale lip trembled with that withering smile which, of all the distorted modes of expressing dark passions, is infinitely the most horrible.

“ Look up, my fair child ; the boy still rides upon the waves, and brings rare news, I promise you.—Another hour, and he will join yon greedy gazers to hunt and howl me from your side ; aye, and for ever ! ”

The appearance of her father on shore had deceived Jessie into a transient belief, that the vessel, of whose fate she had so lately been a witness, could not have belonged to him; and that, in consequence, he could not be the Privateer to whose deeds she had listened with such chilling apprehensions. The delusion, favoured by her confused insensibility to the conclusion, which might have been drawn from his words, awakened all her feelings to a thrill of unspeakable and most unexpected happiness.—

“ My father in danger did he say? and departing for ever? than will your Jessie be the companion of your flight—To see you here at this moment is a blessing indeed, and my love and duty will support me through every vicissitude of danger and dreary banishment!”—

“ What” cried Colraith, absolutely shuddering with the tumult within him—“ bear

your young beauty over distant lands ! tear you from all your fortunes, and prospects of bright days with him who comes to scoff more loudly at your father ! Then be it so—to take you hence is the only curse I can leave—the only joy I can carry with me”—

“ Why then delay ? though you have dared to venture upon this crowded beach, I can read that your danger is most pressing—Oh it was rashness ! ”

“ Came I not to my daughter ? have I never dared worse than this for you ? No, never shall you remain to be blasted with the love of an Ardourly.”

“ You are unjust to him, my father, but I have ceased to pray you to a kinder feeling—I too have been unjust, for, you will scarce believe me, my fears suggested that, even now, you sought his life”—

“ You shall not hear the truth from

chance, nor scorn me for doing that which I dare not avow—Yon dastard Frenchman (was there no wave to sink beneath, no magazine to fire, no alternative but treachery to his master and captivity for himself?) yon Frenchman, had he done my bidding, had now been sailing over an undisputed element which whelmed them all—all that I hated or feared, in silence, secret and eternal.”—The blood again rushed from his daughter’s cheeks. “Dost thou see,” he continued, “to what man’s nature may be brought by a ruined name, a lost wife, and a deserted child?”

Jessie clasped her hands in agony. “I see they will bring it to madness! my father, Oh my misguided father! now more than ever is it needful for me to bear you company—never more will I leave your side, till by kneeling and weeping I have recalled you

to human feelings, or till your remorseless thirst for vengeance on those who deserve it not, has fallen upon the head of your loved child, and left you to a late repentance on her grave"—

He laid his hand upon her shoulder in the same passionate agitation, but with extreme tenderness—" On *thy* grave! *thee* by thy mother's side! *thee*, the last star of an exile's twilight existence! And shall they live unscathed by the fire they have kindled; the desolation they have made for thee, shall it not be a blast of pestilence to howl through their withered hearts? shall it not"—

" Merciful powers, my father! talk not thus wildly—forget not that you stand within the reach of hundreds who, as the acknowledged, the terrific Pirate, would be but too well-pleased to wreak the wrongs they have

received from you—to grasp, Oh, I am sick with horror, the man who best can speak of his lost relation”—

“ ’Tis false ! his minion there can better speak of him—even now they plot together how best they can bring me to the death which would make such holiday for the filthy rabble—My false kinsman lives,—I tell thee—a curse upon the coward weakness which provided it not otherwise !”

“ Invercraig ! found ! rescued ; and alive ! Now the God of mercies be praised ! *that* blood your soul has escaped—I will fly with you wherever the winds may bear us, and weary Heaven with prayers to bless you with forgiveness.”

“ Wherever the winds may bear us ! true, there shall be our home—but where is the brave ship to climb the billows ? is it the shattered hulk that droops at the stern of yonder

brig? And where are the bold Scots, the faithful vassals of Gleneldie—where are they to aid us at our need? Where they expect their master to unbind the fetters which their faith has woven for them!"

"Sad, indeed, is their fate! But, oh! my father, remember your own perils—the wind blows strongly against the vessels, and, ere they bring the news, which gives the last death-blow to our name, we may be far away." Jessie clung to the arm of her father, in the act of leading him away; but again loosed it and turned to Miss Grey, who had remained wholly disregarded and almost petrified with silent astonishment—

"My sweet Emily," she said, "forgive me that I made you not the confidant of my sorrows, for which you have seen there was good reason—I would not check your lively spirits by such cruel disclosures—Farewell,

may blessings attend you, may you be happy with the man who loves you—Be kind to my poor old guardian, whom I never shall behold again. Be to him as Jessie has been; and tell him I only leave him for a superior duty.—Farewell: you are the gentlest friend an exile's daughter ever knew." She pressed her lips fondly to the bewildered girl's cheek, and turned from her to depart; but, seeing her father about to speak, again delayed.

"Young lady," he said, with a degree of kindness, "you have caused my child some happy moments—you have soothed her with affection when she was in need of it;—receive a father's thanks,—it is all a fugitive can say." He placed his arm under that of Jessie, and half-leading, half-lifting her, conveyed her, through the midst of the company, to where a small skiff was moored to the beach. Emily at first be-

held the enterprise with too much fear to give way to her tears, but when she saw the outlaw and his hapless daughter push off from the land, unnoticed, and bearing away for a blue point to the north, they burst forth as if her heart would have broken. It was long ere she moved from the spot she had been occupying. Raleigh and his dangers and his victory were almost forgotten, and her eyes were rivetted to the little bark alone. As its white sail grew less and less, her soul seemed to sink in proportion, and when, like a fairy spirit of the deep, it disappeared altogether, she threw herself upon her seat of turf, and hiding her face with both hands, recalled, with the most piteous regret, the thousand endearing qualities of her beloved Jessie, with the thousand sorrows she was doomed to undergo. The morning passed, the afternoon blast blew chill and dreary,

the sun was gone, and the groupes upon the beach, sated with the interesting spectacle, had vanished likewise. Emily was still there weeping and almost frozen with cold; she could not leave the place where she had parted with Jessie, for the whole scene appeared so like a delusive phantasy, that she almost expected to see her return. Finding, at length, that the sands were deserted, she rose and traversed them with an irregular pace, as if, one while, endeavouring to escape from the confusion which surrounded her; and, again, pausing to examine the events which occasioned it. She continued her solitary musings till interrupted by a distant voice from the sea, stealing through the moon-light with a mellow chant, which conveyed a comfort she had been too sad to remember. It was the plaintive and prolonged cry of heaving the lead, and presently

the manly and well-known voice of Raleigh thrilled through her ears, with a command to let go the anchor, and a heavy plash in the water, and the running of the cable, assured her, that a few moments would bring him safe to land. It was then that she experienced something like self-reproach, for suffering her grief for her friend to supersede her fears for her lover, though by this she was spared an additional agitation, which would have been as powerful as unnecessary; and though, while she stood expecting him alive and well on shore, her delight was not less than it would have been, had she previously felt all that she deemed necessary.

The arrival of the brig and her prize was made known through the town, in good time for the crowd to re-assemble on the beach and witness the landing of Raleigh, who, it was rightly supposed would bring his wounded

and his prisoners on shore without delay. So pressing was the curiosity and emulation to congratulate the bold captain, that pouring from every quarter to the spot where Emily stood (as the nearest to the vessels), the thronging numbers unceremoniously carried her into the very dash of the spray—yet she heeded it not, or, if she did, she thought the better of them ; for what inconvenience, nay, what calamities will not woman endure, so they tell to the honour of him she loves ? The first indication of a removal from the brig was transmitted in a deadly shriek from the Lady of Brachenshaw, whose late experience in warlike achievements had, we are sorry to declare, been wholly ineffectual in supplying her with courage enough to steady the swing chair. In a little while, however, as the boat was seen gliding across a gleam of the moon-shine, her figure was

distinguished in "pride of place," and perfect safety, and it was soon understood, from the condescension with which she was holding forth, that peace and good-fellowship were still the ruling deities.

"Well, now, only look!" she was heard to exclaim; "if there are not ever so many people waiting to see us land, and ask all about the battle! To be sure it is very natural that they should, only I am afraid I shall not be able to tell them half—I am so sorry the poor French gentleman was obliged to be put amongst the prisoners—he would have enjoyed this so much—so many faces all shining in the moonlight!"

"Be quiet, my leddy; if the lad is fond of sights, he will see as many faces again, shining all in the day-light, when he is going to be executed—and, as I was saying, in reply to the daft Captain's abuse of the

Decoctum Anthemidis nobilis, otherwise called camomile-tea ; it is a very good specific, provided it be made of the *aqua pluvialis*, or rain-water. *Aqua levissima pluvialis est*, and therefore he will mind, the next time we sing a duet, or song for two voices, that he takes it an octave lower, and proceeds less *ad libitum*."

While Raleigh was remarking on the profound research and very learned words of this harangue, the boat was rapidly nearing the shore, and the bustle amongst the crowd increased. Some were struggling with those behind them to prevent themselves from being pushed into the water, and some actually waded up to their middles to be gratified with the first sight. The instant the light keel dashed through them and clove into the noiseless sand, the air trembled with a shout, that nearly caused the startled Lady of Brachen-

shaw to leap overboard. The repetition of it, coming less unexpected, was not considered so unpleasant, and the third huzza quite charmed her into raptures. It was the first time she had ever been honoured with such a reception, and not dreaming that the applause could be meant for any one but herself, she was no sooner assisted out of the boat, than she condescendingly returned the salutation with one of her best courtesies. But her satisfaction, on facing about to perform the same civility on the other side, was suddenly checked by the untoward spectacle of her fair niece in the arms of Captain Raleigh. She was, of course, immediately snatched out of them, and placed under the protection of Ardourly, who, indeed, was happy in the opportunity of inquiring for Jessie. Mr. Ayrton was left to help along his neighbour of universal knowledge : and the queen of the

party, conceiving that the captain of a ship, whatever might be his merits elsewhere, while he continued within hail of it, and, particularly on landing from a successful conflict, was a very great personage, seized Raleigh by the luckless arm, which she had just eased of so much lighter a burden, and marched him off without deigning to make any inquiry whatsoever as to his opinion of the movement.

CHAPTER VIII.

Ah, wretch ! what boots thee to cast back thy eyes
Where dawning hope no beam of comfort shews ?
While the reflection of thy forepast joys
Renders thee double to thy present woes :
Rather make up to thy new miseries,
And meet the mischief that upon thee grows.

CRASHAW.

THE disposition of Ardourly was of a nature which could conceive no reparation, sufficient where he had committed an injury ; but to Jessie no reparation could be offered. He had mistrusted a heart where every pulse was beautiful ; he had wounded it, while it pitied and loved him, yet never might he be permitted to confess his error or enjoy the consolation that his contrition was accepted. The chief confidant of his self accusations was Emily—she was the dearest friend of Jessie, and knew best how to estimate his loss, while the delicacy of her mind

was infinitely the most calculated to afford the little comfort he was capable of receiving. The influence she said, which Jessie possessed over her father was great, and her decided attachment to Ardourly would soon point out the subject for its first exertion—Colraith might desist from the pursuit of mis-directed vengeance, and yield to the only means of restoring her to happiness. To see her exposed to all the miseries of banishment more miserable from the contemplation of a father's guilty obduracy, would be far too painful for his parental devotion. Jessie would return, and return even for Ardourly.—

Ardourly listened with a melancholy pleasure—he would not be sanguine in the expectation of such events, but he loved to talk of them, and, Raleigh being much occupied in refitting the brig and other duties, he enjoyed

the satisfaction with little interruption. Mrs. M'Kay was in high hope—the departure of Jessie had increased her household cares to such a degree, that she seldom wanted an excuse to leave them alone. She contrived long rides for them, with long excuses for her own timidity, which would not permit her to make a third—she recommended long walks and deplored the delicate state of her health, which confined her to a promenade upon the sand—a resort to which it was not proper for her niece to accompany her, by reason of the little naked boys who pursued their gambols with as much regard to decorum as to the briskness of the season ;—she hoped, however, (and her public spirit had already obtained the thanks of the community,) that her frequent admonitions would soon bring the urchins to a better sense of their improprieties. Affording all these facilities to the

young people, and duly appreciating the favourable absence of Miss Colraith, Mrs. M'Kay did not hesitate to settle it in her own mind that her plans would arrive at a speedy accomplishment. It was probable, from his subsequent conduct, that she had misunderstood the answer which Ardourly had returned to her impetuous attack on board ship, but circumstances had undergone a great revolution, and the present intimacy was perfectly conclusive.—Every whisper in the ear of Miss Grey conveyed nothing less than the one important question, and every conference with Mr. Ayrton (whose story constituted the present wonder of the day) was relative to the arrangement of settlements—But alas!

The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gly.

and so did those of Lady Brachenshaw. One

day the Laird of Invercraig, and his adopted were closeted together longer than usual, and Mrs. M'Kay became more and more curious to understand the topic they were discussing; so much so, that after taking two or three circumspective peeps, she ventured, on tiptoe, to the door, to the key-hole of which she forthwith applied her ear—the gentlemen, however, spoke in too low a voice for her, and, excepting the mention of her niece, she could not collect food enough even for the starved quality of a guess. But Lady Brachenshaw was not to be daunted by such difficulties, her motto was *L'esperance*, and she only felt the inconvenience of, now and then, carrying it too far—she remained in her interesting employment for some time; when the door most unexpectedly flew open; and she stood fully confessed in all the simpli-

city of astonishment, and all the confusion of a detected culprit, before the eyes of Mr. Ayrton and Ardourly—having received their salutations, she was about to offer some explanation as to the situation in which she was surprised, when Mr. Ayrton relieved her embarrassment by declaring, with a look of some comicality, that her Ladyship was well met under any circumstances, but particularly under the present, since her accidental proximity would probably render it unnecessary to open a subject upon which he desired her sentiments.—Lady Brachenshaw politely assured him that her sentiments, in all things, could not do better than coincide with those of the polished Laird of Invercraig; but that her knowledge of the conversation he alluded to was much over-rated, since she had only heard a very small part of it. Notwithstanding

this blundering confession, the imperturbable good breeding of Mr. Ayrton could not be strained beyond a sly look at Ardourly, who had himself indeed too much upon his mind to be inclined to merriment from this or any other motive. Mrs. M'Kay was handed to a chair, where she waited, with prim complacency, to negotiate the long looked for establishment of her niece. The Laird commenced by observing that it would be quite superfluous to expatiate on the amiable manners, and interesting appearance of Miss Grey; but the aunt, desirous of driving a handsome bargain, disputed the propriety of the omission, *in limine*, and ran over a catalogue which had been conned for the especial purpose. Mr. Ayrton thanked her for the fluency with which she had helped him out. "My boy," he said, "has of late, had many opportunities of observing the young

lady's character ; and I should not hesitate to rely upon his judgment, even were it not aided by the conviction that no security for the happiness of the man she may select, can be greater than that of her having been the protégée of the sagacious Mrs. M'Kay."

"Or than that of her having been the friend of Miss Colraith," added Ardourly. Mrs. M'Kay was mightily pleased with the former speech, and thought it was no time to be offended at the latter. "To be sure," she said, "it is very natural that, now Miss Colraith is gone, Mr. Ardourly should (not to draw any comparisons) transfer his regard to her friend."

"Not to say any thing of transfers, my dear Madam, I certainly have a great regard for Miss Grey ; and, as I assured you once before, am anxious to see her happily provided for ; to the furtherance of which,

Mr. Ayrton has kindly offered to contribute his assistance."

"Most joyful shall I be, if it proves of any avail," said the Laird. "The primary object (which is the attachment of the parties) appears fully established; and nothing remains to be considered, but the means they will have to live upon. Miss Grey will of course have *some* fortune, and the admiration which both I and my boy entertain for her, will oblige us to put her admirer, Captain Raleigh (to whom, besides, I owe much for my deliverance,) in possession of a sufficiency to aspire to her."

For a moment Mrs. M'Kay was a petrifaction—was it possible that she had plumed herself with the expectation of a proposal from Ardourly, to receive it only from the rude, the boisterous, the low-bred Captain Raleigh! Could any terms be strong enough

to express her indignant rejection of such a suitor, or the abhorrence and ill opinion his conduct had universally excited? The theme was more prolific than that of her niece, and would, beyond all doubt, have lasted her till midnight, had not the Laird put a sudden period to it by the magic mention of ten thousand pounds.

“ I will present Captain Raleigh with ten thousand pounds; and surely you will allow him to be a very gallant young man ?”

Mrs. M'Kay saw that all chance of obtaining Ardourly must be at an end, and *therefore* Captain Raleigh certainly was a very gallant young man.

“ Ay, and a very handsome young man,” said Ardourly—

“ Oh, there is no disputing that—I give every one his due.”

“ And, besides,” rejoined Mr. Ayrton,

“ a very clever humorous young man, Mrs. M‘Kay.”

“ Certainly, there can be no doubt but he is generally thought so.”

“ And, moreover, very good-hearted and good-natured, and well-mannered, when you come to understand him.”

“ It may, indeed, very likely be so, when you understand him. I am sure, I never owed Captain Raleigh any ill-will; and since you are obliging enough to say you will give him ten thousand pounds, and if it should prove that I have misunderstood my niece’s inclinations all this time, why, then, I do not see that I can have any particular objection to the marriage.”

“ None on earth,” cried Ardourly; “ and when you have not reason to be proud of him, the Laird will give him another ten thousand to make him more worthy. Go,

my dear Madam, and consult your niece, for it is best to do business when we are in the humour for it."

Mrs. M'Kay departed; not, certainly, so well satisfied as she would have been with the heir presumptive; but quite as well satisfied as she could be without him—while Ardourly turned once more to express his warm thanks for the good Laird's liberality.

"Say no more of it," he replied; "the gift is your own, for whatever I part with is substracted from your fortune hereafter;—and, now you are satisfied in this, let us see you with a more hopeful countenance; for I am persuaded, that there is much reason in Miss Grey's arguments, and that Jessie will return in time to be her bride's-maid—ay, and a bride herself.—Colraith cannot have left the country for the vigilant measures which have been taken round the

coast ; and, ere he finds opportunity to bear her away, trust me, he will relent, and throw off his enmity rather than leave his beloved daughter unprotected."

The communication of Mr. Ayrton's generosity to the brave sailor was made in a manner which no fastidious delicacy could object to, and was followed by another, "On his Majesty's service;" by which, amidst high encomiums on his conduct in the late action, he found himself appointed Post, with the promise of a frigate on the first convenience. Ardourly, who loved to hear the praises of his friend better than his own, insisted on reading the letter aloud, and, at every syllable the portly figure of Mrs. M'Kay assumed an additional altitude, with a "hem" of satisfaction in her distinguished nephew, whom she began to consider almost, if not quite, as fine a young man as Ardourly himself.

The only one who did not congratulate him was Emily. The tears of joy were starting to her blue eyes, and she retired to a distance to breathe a silent blessing on the benevolence which had united her to him.

While this scene of amity was going forward in the parlour, the philosophic Laird of Brachenshaw was in the study, promoting one of a very opposite nature : his initiation in the mysteries of war had created an enormous taste for the noble art, and he did not scruple to gratify it at the expense of every belligerent insect in his reach. The god of battles was now presiding over a combat between two crickets, which the old gentleman had captured, and placed under a sieve ; in which situation he was examining their evolutions with microscopic minuteness, and tickling them with the end of a straw, to the utmost pitch of fury : but the sparkling

delight of his eyes, and the connoisseur-like grin of his whole countenance, were woefully interrupted by the reception of a *sub-pœnâ* to appear on the trial of the prisoners, taken in the corvette. He immediately left his two champions to finish their affair of honour according to their own pleasure; and gaping full in the face of the messenger, hobbled past him to the room in which we have assembled the rest of the household.

“Eh, lads—Eh, neighbour Invercraig—I cannot go, I cannot go—I don’t like courts of justice, for there is no saying how a body may come out of them! I’ll order the horses, and run away straight—let them hang those they can catch.”

“Hillo, Laird!” cried Raleigh; “what is the matter? Surely, the whole tribe of Linnaeus have risen up in judgment against you!”

“Worse than that, lad ; worse than that—I am to go, and be examined about keeping the secrets of that cut-throat Glenekdie. Here’s a subpoena ! Dont-ye speak of it ; dont-ye say a word—I’ll be off like a grass-hopper. Ho, Sandy ! order the horses to be put to ; I am going a little ride ; and, and, Sandy, I’m wanting a little neutral tint, that is, I would say, my wig and spencer.”

The panic of Mr. M’Kay was offered a relief, in the assurance that Mr. Ayrton and Raleigh had been summoned likewise ; and that all they had to dread would be the long standing in a crowded court, and the witnessing of a melancholy sentence ; but it was this very sentence that the prudent old gentleman was so unwilling to witness, thinking (as his lady had done), that there was no saying upon whom it would be passed. Ardourly persuaded, Mr. Ayrton rallied him,

and Raleigh laughed at him ; but still, though somewhat pacified, he was not all convinced of the necessity for rashly venturing between the fangs of the law.

“ Why, my brave neighbour of Brachenshaw,” said the Laird of Invercraig, “ whether would you run ? Men of your science need never fear the laws, the laws have too much respect for them.”

“ Ay, ay, that may all be very well ; but I’d just like to hear the questions they’ll ask me.”

“ None but what you will very readily answer. You will probably be asked, if you were in the habit of seeing Colraith after his banishment.”

“ And I say, ‘ Yes’—it wont do—I must be off.”

“ And then they will ask you, if you had ever any reason to believe, that he lived by

committing piracies in the ship which was generally supposed to be a French privateer."

"To be sure I did. It won't do, I tell you, it will not do—I want my neutral; that is, my wig and spencer."

"Be less alarmed," said Ardourly,—“tell them he came to see his pale, his desolate child; and ask, had he been more black than monster ever yet was painted, which of them would have betrayed him in the exercise of his last lingering virtue; which of them would have denied, that the perilous path was hallowed, which a banished parent trod on such an errand?”

“Ay, lad, you have hit it precisely. I would not have betrayed him for all the laws of the land; and if he has not been just so grateful as he ought to have been, (seeing, as you say, that he would have destroyed me

for my years,) I cannot help wishing him well, in spite of it.—May God mend him.”

The good old man underwent many alternations of confidence and alarm—sometimes talking composedly of what he should say on the trial, and sometimes starting up with a determination to decamp; so that it was absolutely necessary for some one of the party to stand sentinel over him, till nine o'clock the next morning, at which time he was to appear at the Court-house.

On descending from his chamber the next morning, Ardourly found the family were already assembled at breakfast.

The seat of honour, at the right hand of Mrs. M'Kay, to which Ardourly had hitherto been promoted with the utmost scupulosity, was now occupied by Raleigh, who, though less than usual inclined to mirth, from the serious business of the day, could not help

calling the attention of his friend by a sidling wink, to the goodly revolution in his affairs. It was clear enough, that our hero had disinherited himself from the pinnacle of Mrs M'Kay's affection; but the feeling gratitude of her niece was worth much greater misfortunes, and he took his seat, where her soft eye invited him by her side. "How I wish," she whispered, while Mrs. M'Kay was examining the glittering epaulettes of her future nephew, "that you, who take so much pains to make others happy, could be made happy yourself! I have news for you, but I know not how you 'll receive it."

Ardourly turned his eyes quickly upon her, but she bade him be silent for the present, and remain with her when the rest were gone to the court.

The conversation was directed to a determination of Mrs. M'Kay, to be present at

the trial—a determination formed partly from curiosity, and partly from a desire to be seen under the protection of Raleigh, whose gallantry had caused him to be much sought after, and whom she was anxious to introduce in public as her loving nephew. Being fully bent upon this exhibition of her good fortune, she had not condescended to ask the opinion of any one as to its feasibility, and had given her first intimation of it, by appearing in full dress, (that is to say, a flaming yellow taffeta gown, with the suitable *chevaux de frize* work of flounces and frills, a black beaver hat, and a feather like the plume of a hearse), that it might be understood at once, that all opposition would be fruitless. The gentlemen, nevertheless, were taking the liberty of offering a few dissuasive words.

“Lady Brachenshaw,” said her husband,

who had at length been persuaded into the propriety of obeying his summons, but with a countenance in which fear was still predominant, to a degree that was pitifully ludicrous—"how can ye be so bloody-minded, and hope to be saved? I'm thinking ye will be for going to the execution next."

"Ay, my dear aunt," cried Raleigh, "postpone your amusement till then; but if you are determined to go to-day, let me take a last look at the yellow taffeta, not a rag will you bring home with you. My stars! my dear aunt, you look like a mustard-pot with a black stopper. Well, farewell, it is likely I may be wanted—I shall be ready to hand you out of the carriage. Oh the yellow taffeta, the mob will tear it as small as butter-cups."

As soon as Raleigh had finished his lamentations, and departed, the argument was

taken up by Mr. Ayrton, who, like Mrs. M'Kay, had considered it necessary to adorn himself for this public occasion with lace ruffles, and the other appertainments to a full dress. He represented, with true feeling, the many inconveniences of a crowd—the heat, the squeezing, the difficulty of getting in, the impossibility of getting out.

“ Even I,” he said, “ and my worthy neighbour, shall be obliged to tuck up the skirts of our coats, and make our entrance in defiance of all ordinary notions of propriety.”

Mrs. M'Kay, however, still remained undaunted—Rather than lose the show she would have submitted to any extremity.

Ardourly offered no advice upon the subject, for he wished her to persist in her determination, and leave him alone with Miss Grey, who, he imagined, had intelligence of Jessie.

He looked at the two Lairds, and he looked at his watch. At last the time arrived, and, with a promise to go to the town by a short cut, and meet the family vehicle which was to make a considerable circuit, he assisted them in, and saw them drive off.—“ Miss Grey” he said, “ we are alone”.

“ And now you shall hear my news—it will be a pleasure, but, alas! it will be a sad one.—Look if you remember this scarf.”

She unfolded it, and presented it to him.

“ Ah, my poor Jessie! I remember it too well—I have worn it in my bosom; I restored it to her on the day which I thought the brightest of my life, and I behold it again on one of the most miserable!”

“ On retiring to my room last night I found it lying on the floor, and with it this letter, thrown in, as it seemed, at the window, which had been accidentally left open.”

Henry recognised the well known hand of Jessie, and he opened it with eagerness.—

“ Once more, ere I leave the land which holds my loved Emily—once more I must enjoy the sweet sorrow of bidding her farewell—I have been near you, oh so near ! but I dared not see you, neither could I write, for there was no messenger in whom I could confide.—Poor Wandering Willie has but just returned from the flight to which he was urged by fear, on my father’s discovery ; he is now sent to provide friends for our escape, and will deliver this as chance shall befriend him.

“ To-morrow at midnight we are gone for ever—though the means of our flight are kept a mystery.

There is one near you to whom I would likewise send a last adieu—it is but a few months since he begged forgiveness for *his* father, who needed none. What shall I say to him for *mine*? He deemed that my heart must reject him, for events which he could not remember. He believed that my distrust and coldness were his

right inheritance. Alas! what will be his thoughts of your unfortunate Jessie? tell him the bosom, whose silent feelings he would once, as I flattered myself, have read with delight, has no longer need of disguise. We part for ever; and it will be a solace to my weary wanderings, that he should know how deeply I shall cherish his memory;—he is too generous to scorn my—Sweet Emily, my cheek burns to write the word—he will not despise me; and if he should, I shall be where no reproaches can reach me. The light memorial in which this is folded was the first he beheld of me—let it be the last—and, when hereafter he may be united to one whose lot is more blest than Jessie's, let him look upon it, and think, if she, who gave it him, had been less earnest for his happiness.—Farewell—may joys be poured as plenteously on your head as sorrows have fallen upon mine.

“Once more, be kind to my good old guardian, and love him for the sake of Jessie.”

If any thing could have affected Ardourly beyond the degree in which he already la-

mented the ruination of the hopes in which he had so fondly indulged, it was the consciousness that, situated as she was with so many other griefs to deplore, the participation in *his* was still uppermost in Jessie's mind.

That he should have been so near her, and so long without his knowledge; that he should still be near her, without knowing where to seek a last interview; and without imploring her father to contemplate the miseries to which he was forcing her; were circumstances most cruelly mortifying. A few hours still remained, but how to take advantage of them, the wandering messenger could alone give the necessary intelligence, and him it was impossible to find. Ardourly looked upon the scarf.

"It is indeed," he sighed, "the last memorial I shall ever see of Jessie."

But, while he was thus desponding, a sudden idea occurred to him; that, could he make known his friendly disposition towards Colraith, he might, from some one of the men, now on their trial, obtain what he despaired of otherwise acquiring. The chance was not to be neglected, and, warmly acknowledging the solicitous concern, which the retiring modesty of Emily spoke only in the eloquence of her looks, he sallied forth to the Court-house.

The strange story of the long-lost Gleneldie identified with the notorious Privateer, and the no less strange one of Invercraig's adventure with him, had been handed through the country with the usual celerity of all things marvellous, and had created a more than common desire amongst all classes to witness the fate of the instruments involved. The street was crowded, therefore, with such

a parti-coloured mob as it perhaps never contained before, and the entrance of the court-house with a considerable space about it, was occupied by an immoveable mass which could make neither one way nor the other.

As Ardourly descended the path to this bustling scene, he distinguished the Brachenshaw coach just winding its way into the town, in which it presently disappeared. He had not walked many hundred yards before his ears were greeted with the shouts of a riot, and he observed such of the crowd as had kept free from the crush of the main body, moving rapidly to some other quarter. It was not long before they returned, running, and hallooing, and in the midst of them the ancient conveyance of the M'Kays. A strong foreboding possessed him, that this respectable equipage was not altogether unconcerned in the commotion which had

taken place; and, as he mingled with the multitude, who were gazing with all the eagerness of tiptoes, and gaping mouths, he desired to know what had happened. His surmise was too true.

By some unaccountable construction of our natures, good order is ever least likely to prevail where there are most to preserve it.

Whether it was that certain idle persons, having been disappointed of penetrating to the grand centre of interest, were resolved to make up for it by a frolic elsewhere; or whether it was that certain allies of the prisoners were exasperated against those who came to witness against them, sure it was that the Brachenshaw coach was waylaid, and the passengers handed out. It is likewise sure that the summary vengeance or justice, or sport of the rabble will always be

exerted upon one elderly lady in preference to two elderly gentlemen; and that this preference will suffer no abatement from the inviting magnificence of a yellow taffeta gown.

Mrs. M'Kay without giving any history of her threats, and expostulations, was visited by missile favours of every description which the kennel could afford. She was, however, rescued without any further damage than that which had been sustained by the paraphernalia, and was replaced in the coach to vent her indignation at the direful insult to the house of Brachenshaw, and listen to the reproaches of Mr. M'Kay, who was well satisfied that she had, at last, found the imprudence of despising good advice. The discipline she had undergone being deemed quite sufficient for the day, and fearing besides that her marks of popularity would

draw too much attention, Mrs. M'Kay was content to postpone her visit to the court. Having set down the gentlemen, she ordered the coachman to drive home. Some of her friends followed her to the end of the street; but though she two or three times protruded her black hat and broken feather from the window to inform them, that she should certainly go to law and tell all the judges of their behaviour, they abstained from all further attentions; and Ardourly seeing her fairly out of their reach, addressed himself to matters of more interest.

He waited some time at the door of the court, and was beginning to doubt the prospect of gaining an entrance, when his hand was seized by a person whom he discovered to be the young soldier from Castleton. "I am called," he said, "from my smuggling post to make a show on this occasion, and

mean, of course, to be a man of importance; so, if you want a dozen or two of these ragged knaves pushed aside to make room for you, it shall be done straight."

"Thank you, my friend," replied Ardourly; "I will benefit by your assistance, in this and in another instance likewise,—I wish to have a moment's conversation with one of the prisoners—can you procure it for me?"

"Not at present, because they are already arraigned; but as it happens that I am to keep guard over them, I think I may contrive it for you by-and-by."

When Ardourly entered the court, he found the confusion without extended no further than the door; all within, though crowded to excess, was deep attention to the business in hand. The prisoners, about

twenty in number, were well aware that their trial was a mere matter of form, and that they had nothing to hope from the result. They marked each other with the fixed eye and compressed lips, which would have said, "to this end are we come at last!" To face death in deeds of honest daring, is what most men are capable of doing; but to approach that death which they receive as being unfit to live, is a test of courage from which the bravest have been known to shrink. In the first, there is the consolation of transmitting a name on which surviving relatives may dwell without disgrace, whose honour the infant is taught to emulate, whose own fair echo forms its most fitting guardian;—in the last, the widow must lament in secret, the very grave-stone must be an unlettered blank—it will be marked with deriding in-

famy, and the bursting heart of smothered friendship will not dare to avenge it.—It was thus the minds of these poor criminals were labouring, while the court was proceeding with the evidence, which they could not controvert, and appeared scarcely to notice. But it is not our intention, in this late stage of our history, to detain the reader with persons to whom he has had so little previous introduction ; and we shall pass over all the formalities of the law, till, after a long pause, during which the eyes and ears of the spectators were turned from one side to the other in hurried expectation of what was to follow, the name of Mr. M'Kay of Brachenshaw was thundered through the court. Mr. M'Kay had anticipated this summons at every pause, which had occurred from the commencement of the trial, till it had so often gone by, that he began to flatter him-

self he should be forgotten altogether. When it came, therefore, it flew like a bullet, and had well nigh laid him prostrate. Being sworn, and placed in the witnesses' box, which was raised some feet above the level of the crowd, the man of science bore so strong a resemblance to one of the elect preparing to demonstrate to his auditors the fallacy of all hopes of redemption, that an involuntary smile ran through the whole assembly. Another long pause ensued, during which he turned himself in so many different directions, and stole so many by-glances at the advocate, who was disposing his papers in proper order for the examination, that his own particular friends were seriously apprehensive of some fugacious attempt to vacate the court. The prospect of success, however, seemed rather obscure, and a demand upon his attention at length made

it impossible.—“ Pray, Sir,” said the advocate, “ What is your christian name ?”

Mr. M’Kay had anticipated a question of much more ponderosity, and answered intrepidly—“ I was christened Alexander, but am commonly called Sandy”—

“ Very well, Sir—and now, since you have so good a recollection of your christening, perhaps you will be good enough to favour me with your age ?”

The old gentleman looked a little puzzled.—“ Why ye’ll see I should have no objection to oblige you, but I am not just such a hand at dates as you gentlemen of the law will be.”

“ Can you speak within a few years ?”

Mr. M’Kay still hesitated—He wished to speak as correctly as possible for fear of consequences—

“ Well, Sir, we will endeavour to furnish

you with a clue—can you compass a sufficient stretch of memory to inform us whether you are married or single ?”

“ Ay surely—Lady Brachenshaw would have been here to make *affidavit* of it, but, God reward her, she met with an accident by the way.”

“ And how many years may it be since your marriage ?”

“ It will be a long time, but I can’t just say how long.”

“ Is it fifty years, do you think ?” “ I’ll no be bound to say.”

“ Do you remember what reign it was in ?” Mr. M’Kay made a long pause, and shook his head.

“ And you have no recollection of your age at the time it took place ?” “ I’ll no be bound to say.”

“ I am afraid we must try some other

means of getting over this difficulty. Have you ever been engaged in any profession?"

Mr. M'Kay favoured him with the enumeration of about a dozen; while the eyes of the spectators were opened in the various degrees of admiration, corresponding with the gradual developement of his acquirements—but when the man of law desired to know the date at which any one of them was undertaken, the man of science was again at a stand still. "I'll not be bound to say—I'm thinking, however, that I call to mind somewhere about the time at which I discontinued one of them; which will be the experimental philosophy, a very fine study, no doubt, but not the less dangerous on that account, seeing that the ignition of a barrel of gunpowder removed a suite of apartments from my residence of Brachenshaw into the river Dee, as my memorandum hath it, on

the precise day with the battle of Bunker's-hill—and, as I was saying, gunpowder is a very excellent composition, though when I was a lad, at the coronation of Queen Anne, sundry accidents were occasioned by the indiscreet levelling of the field-pieces.”

“ Well, Sir, we are getting on—You were at that time about the age of—?

“ Twenty or thirty, or there away—more or less.” This was the nearest calculation that Mr. M'Kay could make, and the man of law wrote down in despair, “ Mr. M'Kay has lived so long, that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.”

The old gentleman, had, so far escaped beyond his hopes, but the solemnity in the arrangement of the next question argued something of fearful importance, and his apprehensions were renewed.

“ You have said, that you remember the

battle of Bunker's-hill, and the coronation of Queen Anne—perhaps you will remember in what manner you were engaged last Monday?”

“ Ay, surely it is very natural that I should—Let me see, last Monday—I'm thinking that I might have been putting the finishing touch to—no, that will not be it, neither—last Monday—I'll no be bound to say—but if it is all the same, I'd be better able to speak of some day in the reign of Queen Anne, that we were talking about; seeing that, of late years, I have had too many studies to take note of other things.”

“ I am sorry I cannot accommodate you, Mr. M'Kay—do you think you were on board his Majesty's brig—on the day mentioned?”

“ Ay, and so I was—I was fishing for an *equus marinus*.”

“Were you in the battle with the French corvette?”

“Truly and I was.”

“Oblige me by looking at the prisoners—do you recollect seeing them engaged against you, or do you believe that they had been previously taken by the corvette, and were there against their inclination?”

“Ye’ll see I am, in no wise, competent to give any opinion—The daft lad there—that is, Captain Raleigh, will vouch for me that I was locked up all the time in a closet below”.—Here was another long pause, during which Mr. M’Kay was in momentary expectation of some frightful question respecting Col-raith. He again turned his eyes from the man of law to the crowd, as if contemplating a rush—but he was completely blockaded.

“And this is all the information you can give?”

“ I’ll be upon my oath of it.”

“ Well, Sir—I have no further questions.”

The old gentleman could not believe his good fortune. “ I’m thinking that ye told me I may retire ?”—The man of law assented, and Mr. M’Kay descended from his perilous station. Having no desire to stay for the chance of being called back, he used no ceremony in making his way through the spectators whom he elbowed without mercy. “ By your leave, Sirs, by your leave—I’d be glad to get out”—and having succeeded in his endeavours, he did not once look back between the court-house and his own residence, where he made a firm resolution never more to keep unlawful company, under any circumstances whatever, for he had made the most narrow escape that ever yet was experienced by mortal man.

The trial did not last long. The prisoners

were found guilty and received their sentence, which was to be executed on board the ship in which their piracies had been committed. For the sake of security their removal was ordered to take place the same evening, and in the mean time no person was to be admitted to speak with them. This was an unforeseen arrangement, to which Ardourly listened with infinite mortification, for the last valuable hours were waning fast, and Colraith might depart with his daughter before any other means could be resorted to for his discovery. In leaving the court, however, he was again met by the young soldier.

“ You have heard my charge,” said he, “ you cannot see them now—but, since I guess you would learn something of their Captain’s pretty daughter, you shall want no opportunity that I can give you. I am to

escort them on board at ten to-night—be here and I will do my best for you.”

Ardourly had no choice—The hour mentioned was within two of that which was to witness Jessie’s flight; but, if he was successful, the speed of a good horse might still carry him to her presence. His mind was too restless to return home immediately—he wandered down to the sea-side to observe if any vessel was in sight which could possibly be destined to bear her away; but not one was visible, excepting the brig and the corvette, the latter of which seemed in a state of preparation for the tragic scene that was to be acted on board of it. From this painful contemplation he turned his steps towards the cave of Wandering Willie (a visit he had on no day omitted) with a vague idea of finding some clue either to the abode of the fugitives, or to the mode of their projected

escape. The rude chasm, however, was still tenantless and preserved the same appearance which it had done on the preceding days. Ardourly quitted it with little disappointment, for he had entered it with little hope. He strayed amongst the slippery rocks where he had before discovered its inmate, but with no better fortune, till, on turning an angle, he came full upon ten or a dozen boats, moored, all together, to the shore. For what purpose these could be here he was at a loss to decide: in any other place he would have taken them for fishing boats, but here all was suspicious and he could not help connecting them with Colraith—Yet how? That he could contemplate crossing the German ocean (and with his daughter) by such means was impossible—and again, why should there be so many? Ardourly mused upon the subject till he found himself at home, and then dismissed it with the per-

suasion that the ideas which gave rise to it, must be altogether delusive.—

At the hour appointed he presented himself at the prison door, which was surrounded by the same multitude he had beheld in the morning, it being understood that the procession was to be as solemn and striking as it could be made, for which purpose it had been reserved till night. He had not waited long before a general sensation was created by the undrawing of the strong bolts; and, when the doors were flung open, the effect was really such as had been meditated. The military escort came forth, two and two, each bearing a flambeaux in his hand, and formed in a line on either side. For a moment the struggle became more violent, and the lights, more glaring from the darkness of the night, displayed all the varied action and expression of riotous impatience. Those in the

front, withheld by the menaces of the soldiers, were endeavouring, hand and foot, to maintain their places, while those in the rear, visible only from an occasional flash upon their features, were pressing forward with equal obstinacy. But the shouting and shrieking, every noise, and every motion, was stilled by the sudden and mournful sound of the coronach. The prisoners were preceded by the music of their native hills, which was only interrupted by the clank of the chains, which bound each of them to one of his fellows. Having all advanced between the two lines of the soldiers, they were halted for an instant, and the civil officers arranged themselves as an inner-guard; another party of soldiers bringing up the rear, the prison-doors were closed, and the procession commenced moving;—still not a sound was heard but the chains, the dismal

coronach, and the slow heavy tread of the multitude, while the chief actors in the scene drooped their heads upon their folded arms, and looked neither to one side nor the other. Ardourly saw that the precautions which had been taken, must effectually destroy his last chance of the intelligence to which he had looked forward with such restless anxiety, and he blamed himself bitterly for consuming the time in vague, inactive hopes, when he vainly believed, he could have devised a thousand plans more likely to succeed. Now it was all too late—he was carried with the stream he scarcely knew whither, till he found himself treading the soft sand of the beach. Several boats were in readiness—part of the criminals being placed in each, with a sufficient number of their guards still bearing their flambeaux—the whole were launched

off. As soon as they felt themselves afloat, the unfortunate men seemed to experience one common feeling—the feeling that they should tread no more on their native land—it was the only one to which they had given utterance, and it was spoken in a general but suppressed groan : the effect it produced called forth a responsive murmur from the crowd. The scene upon the water was not less impressive than that which had preceded it. The red flame of the torches was borne to their destination in a line of funereal regularity, and the slow dirge came over the gleaming waters with increased solemnity ; but that which was calculated to excite the greatest awe, was the corvette itself. It lay about two cable-lengths from the shore ; but when the boats went round to enter on the farther side, which was done, perhaps, to exhibit

it more fully, its long shadow extended to the feet of the beholders, and the clearness with which every part of it was seen, made the distance appear considerably less. The damage which it had received in the action was too great to admit of its serving any other purpose than the present one; and such of its masts as could be spliced together, were, with the hull, painted entirely black. The shrouds also were black, as were three narrow platforms which projected some feet from its sides, so as to be equal with the three yard-arms from which, wavering with the motion of the tide, dropped the thin ministers of the law's vengeance.

The soldiers of the first boat, having ascended the gang-way, held their torches on either side of it while the prisoners followed. The two foremost looked round the deck as if the alterations had destroyed

all recollection of their former ship. They spoke a word to the guard, then raised their hands and clasped them to their foreheads—The rest were soon brought up, evincing the same sensations of surprise and horror; and the whole being arranged in a line, with their faces to the shore, the coronach was again wakened, till the torches were suddenly cast into the sea, and the spectacle concluded in darkness and dead silence. The crowd were satisfied and turned slowly to their homes. Ardourly was again following the stream when his progress was arrested by the sound of his own name—It was the voice of Kenneth.

Note.—A ceremony very similar to the above was observed, not long since, in the punishment of some pirates at Malta.

CHAPTER IX.

Death is the crown of life:
Were death deny'd, poor man would live in vain;
Were death deny'd, to live would not be life;
Were death deny'd, ev'n fools would wish to die.
Death wounds to cure; we fall; we rise; we reign!
Spring from our fetters; fasten in the skies;
Where blooming Eden withers in our sight;
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost—
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death?
When shall I *die*?—When shall I live for ever?

YOUNG.

“KENNETH,” said Ardourly, “I am always rejoiced to see you—but what brings you from the hills?”

“In good time, Master Henry—there’s much to be praised, and much to be lamented, since you left them; but we will leave all that for better leisure. I have just parted from Miss Grey (and blessings on her soft

heart, for the love she bears my young lady); she says, Miss Jessie is still near us, and that you will be wanting yon wandering will-o' the-wisp to guide you to her."

"I would give my life for one interview."—

"Let us push through the crowd then, and get well horsed. If Willie can guide us. We will see my young Lady still: you would give your life to see her, and so would I—we shall not shrink from the danger then, though the Lord knows if ever we shall return."

"My first of friends, we will look to the hazards hereafter." Ardourly could say no more, for his heart had bounded to his throat, and seizing the arm of Kenneth to prevent a separation, they forced their way through the multitude, and spoke not till they found themselves in Mr. M'Kay's stable,

when Ardourly threw the saddle on his horse, and desired his companion would do the same by one of the Laird's. "In truth, will I," said Kenneth, "there is no time to ask leave, for he must bear his swish tail faster than he has done for these last dozen years."

The steady old coacher was soon arrayed, with blinkers and the Brachenshaw crest, and they left the premises without interruption, Kenneth leading the way.

"To the north, to the north, Master Henry, and across the Don. We'll have a good five miles to go, and that by a road of our own making."

"Spyr him along, good Kenneth—we must stand the chance of floundering." They passed through the fields on the full gallop, descended the rough bank, and crossed the river with scarcely a stoppage. As they climbed the opposite side with slackened pace,

Kenneth took the opportunity of explaining whither they were going. " You asked what brought me from the hills : it was not to rejoice with you for the rescued Laird, nor to mourn with you for the loss of my young lady ; though I would have gone to the world's end to do either. I expected you at Invercraig, and thought I had best remain there ; till, this morning, I fancied my coming might prevent fresh mischief. I was abroad while the stars were still shining, and wended away to Brachenshaw. What it was that took me there I can hardly say—whether the chance was lucky or no remains to be proved—I looked about the old place, it may be, thinking of my young lady and her misfortunes ; and then I rambled away to the Gleneldie ruins and round them, and through them—scratching rhymes upon the old stones, and wondering if my young lady

would ever come back to read them—when who should I see, curled up in the rubbish beneath my feet, but Wandering Willie. The poor wight seemed to have had a hard night's work of it, for he slept as though he would never have waked again, and his bare feet were swollen and cut with the flints. I could not have it in my heart to disturb him ; and I thought to myself that when he rose up he would be stiff and starved with cold and hunger, without being able, and perhaps without daring, to comfort himself at any of the neighbouring cots (for you know he has robbed them all in his time) ; and so I even set out to beg a little food and whiskey for the poor creature. Would you believe it ? he had been at every one of them before me. I would not betray him ; so I just asked the first goodwife, in an off-hand manner, if she had seen any thing of our old acquaintance,

Wandering Willie—"In truth have I," said she, "for he knocked us up ere the clock had gone three this morning, and the good man went down to trouble him for a stray pullet or two—but somehow, Willie had news, Lord knows what, that saved him for this once, and the good man took the old claymore and said he should not be home before to-morrow."

I went to at least twenty cots, and heard the same story. It was now broad day, and I returned to give Willie his food and learn what devil's work was in hand. But no—the sun was shining on the bed, and Willie was off. I looked round about and waited awhile, but he came not back; and then I repented of my little wit for letting him off when I had him—I thought he might be on business for Gleneldie, and thought that fresh harm might some way befall yourself or

the Laird, and so I even got me back to Invercraig, as fast as I could, and mounted a horse for Aberdeen. As I came within some half-dozen miles of it, the evening growing something dusky, I saw a body before me, jogging warily along like a fox going out to feed, and may I die if it was not that very gibbet-cheating Wandering Willie, who, I fancied, could not have laid a leg to the ground for the next month. It was no use to try at catching him, for he might have whisked away on either side, and been out of sight in a minute. I kept behind and followed at a distance, so as just to keep him in my eye, when, all at once, he turned to the left to cut across the country. 'The fiend knows what became of my horse, for down I jumped and followed the scent on foot. For a full hour was I kept on the jog—venturing nearer and nearer as the night grew darker—

We crossed a flat swampy moor till we came to a steep bit of hill. Willie went up at the same prowling jog, and I must say that I was well nigh breathed. When we came to the top, however, he stopped at a lone, miserable hut and knocked—I was not thirty yards behind him, and saw the old Devil incarnate, Kitty Rankie let him in. I went no further, for I thought my questioning would do no good; and, feeling pretty sure that, having run not short of sixty miles, besides what he might have done before, there was little danger of his going off again, I made my way to Aberdeen, where I got about two hours ago, to see what you and the Laird would think best to be done. There I saw Miss Grey and Captain Raleigh (for the two Lairds were gone to see the sight, and the old lady of Brachenshaw was very poorly in bed from some fright in the

morning) and they sent me where I, at last, found you."

"Thanks, thanks, good Kenneth—But now we seem on level ground again—push on for the life of you."

"Softly, Master Henry, I cannot see my horse's head; and it is not so easy to steer for a lone hut on this midnight muir. I minded we must keep just within hearing of the sea."

"I hear it plainly to the right—and see, the moon is rising."

"She is in blessed time for us—where yon two hills dart their black outlines into each other's bosom—that is the direction."

"Then fare you well. To meet Glenelg may be an enterprise of some danger,—surrounded as he may be by hearts as desperate as his own—and there is no reason why you should be exposed to it."

“ If you leave me, it must be by good speed, Master Henry. Do you think I would guide you to so rash an adventure, without having my share of it? We must use some management, and settle what we mean to do ; for to rush in amongst Gleneldie and his desperadoes, (with sorrow be it spoken of my young Lady’s father,) would be neither more nor less than cutting your own throat.”

“ Then, i’ faith, it is neither more nor less than I mean to do. His chief reason for making his daughter the companion of his exile, is the danger of her becoming my wife. My purpose is to swear to him, that if he leaves her in Scotland to the enjoyment of the same comfort and comparative happiness in which my disastrous visit found her, I will quit it myself for ever. Not only will I yield up every hope that I centred in her, but use my best endeavours to induce Mr.

Ayrton to a compliance with all he has desired."

Kenneth could not reply, for as Ardourly ceased to speak, he plunged the spurs in his horse, and pursued the prescribed direction at a rate which was perfectly uncompanionable.

We must now leave them to perform the remainder of their expedition as they might, and use our less confined privilege of locomotion to arrive at their destination before them. It was indeed, as Kenneth had described it, a lone and miserable hovel—the roof was thatched with weeds, and the sides plastered with mud—it stood aloft upon the point of a steep mound without a tree to shelter it—the wind moaned round it, like the last breath of the dying, and the distant dash of the ocean, whose white margin heaved like a line of angry life between two

eternities of black annihilation, fell with it in a cadence of thrilling desolation. Within this abode of wretchedness, in motionless full length before the dim, lurid gleam of a peat fire, were stretched the exhausted limbs of Wandering Willie. Over him was bent his aged mother, now shaking him from his almost deadly lethargy, and tempting him with food which he was too overcome to receive, and now demanding with equal unsuccess the result of his exertions. These were all that, at first, met the eye, for, all around was enveloped in darkness; but when the hag moved the smoking turf, and a faint gleam shot up in momentary life, two other forms were visible. The one reclined, in pale and forlorn beauty, upon a heather couch. The other, with the tenderness of the father beaming through the ferocity of the implacable exile, was seated in shadowy

silence by her side. "She sleeps!" he exclaimed, and rose up with his eyes still fixed upon her. "It is the first oblivion that her griefs have known upon that lowly bed. My daughter! and is this your fortune? You, for whom I looked so largely—whose virtue, honour, and beauty were to dazzle men's eyes till they saw not the stain upon your banished father;—you—the tenant of a shed that screens us only by its wretchedness?" He stood, and still gazed, till a moan from Willie, whom his mother continued to importune, seemed first to remind him, that there were others present. "Old woman," he said, "Come hither." Kate looked up. The dark lowering eye of Colraith was bent full upon her, and while she obeyed, she shrunk from him.—"Come hither—you were one of those who were sheltered in the hall of my father's, and afterwards became a

vagrant as its master did—you will have good reason then to remember the day on which we left it?"

"Ay, my Master—the flames that curled about it are still reddening in the old woman's dreams, and the dropping of the good walls have startled her—Oh, many 's the time in the dead of night."

"And we departed"——?

"To yon Laird with the odd fancies. He that's run mad after butterflies, and has been too learned to help my young Lady mind the poor. Ah, I will ne'er forget it. I helped to bear my bonny mistress that is in heaven."

"'Tis true, Kate; and you saw me take my last look at her—you can recall it? When nature had grown dizzy with confused affliction, and could no more support her—she sank, and slept. Was it not thus, even as her

child is sleeping ? her white cheek, clustered with her scattered ringlets, yet quivering with the sleepless fever in its veins—and her pale lips apart to struggle with the breath which scarce would pass them—Oh, it was thus ! and thus I parted from her.”

“ My bonny Lady, when she waked and found you not there, it was worse than ever with her—she fled round the house with her hands clasped and her head well nigh crazed, and shrieked and called my good master’s name till”—

“ Peace, peace, old woman—had not my mistaken love confided her to other hands—had I but borne her with me to repose upon the heart which even now is all her own, the cold earth, perchance, had not closed over that form which was its fairest ornament.”

“ Ah, woful was the day ! I plucked the last flowers that bloomed in her dainty

hand, and I heard the hard stones fall with a deadly sound upon her coffin : but what of that ? the bonny lady could no hear them."

"Peace, hag, I say." His voice trembled, and the old woman was silent. "I called you to see my child—how like she is to her mother. No more—for the memory of other times is stealing from that which is due to the present. How fares my good messenger? has he spoken?"

"He has not moved since he fell flat in upon his face, nor given a sign of life beyond one low moan. Poor Willie, we'll have been true to Gleneldie"—

"And has it been forgotten, Kate?"

"No, the blessings on my young lady, no—but we'll have a crooked life to live when she's away."

"Be satisfied, you shall not in vain have been faithful to Gleneldie—live happily and

live honestly ; for why should *you* pursue your war of little rapine ? *You* have no wrongs that call for vengeance on your humble kind, away, old woman." Kate stood aside, while Colraith took her son's arm, and raised him up. " What, ho, my messenger !—silent so many hours ! speak man and tell me how you sped." The voice of his master shot through the frame of Poor Willie, and startled him almost to his feet, but his strength was insufficient, and he fell backwards, still, however, turning upon him his wild and blood-shot eyes with an expression of fear.

" Why should you dread me, boy ? Cannot the mind so faithful and so patient in the endurance of hard toil, compass the quality of that lesser courage in which none else are wanting ?" Willie raised his hand in an attitude of pointing, and faintly, but eagerly, spoke a few words, which none, perhaps,

but his mother and Colraith could have understood. "Ay !" cried the latter, "so many of them already assembled ! then it is time they know the service to be done." He took down from the blackened wall two pistols and a dirk, and, having disposed them about his person, he further armed himself with a ship's cutlass, and, over all, arranged the protecting folds of a large boat-cloak.

"My master," said Kate, as he laid his hand upon the door, "if my young Lady wakes, what answer shall I make?"

"That I return ere long, and the rising sun shall find us where no danger follows." He raised the latch and was gone. Kate returned to her son, who had again fallen into a painful sleep. "Willie, what Willie, will ye no say what business the master will be on? Lift up your head, my bonny lad—

here'll be the broth of yon shrill cock, that has waked the neighbours many's the good year—lift up ; it will be nought but a bit stiffness and the blistering of your feet ;—say, Willie lad, what will the master be after?" Kate questioned in vain, and in vain rolled him from one side to the other : Willie gathered himself up like a hedgehog, and bade defiance to all assailants. While she was in the midst of her persecutions, she was alarmed by the trampling of horses, and, to her utter dismay, the door was dashed open for the admittance of Ardourly and his persevering attendant.

" Hold, Kate! whither would you escape! Secure the door, Kenneth, we have both the mother and son."

The old woman considered that the appearance of terror would betray all which it was most important to conceal ; and, trusting to

the darkness and the sound sleep of Jessie, she ventured to reply to Ardourly's impatient question, that she was very glad to see his Honour, and hoped he would leave a poor body something to drink his health in a tess of whiskey ; but that, unless her young lady was safe at Brachenshaw, she could give him no information respecting her. She had not seen the dainty young thing since she spoke with his Honour on Loch na Garr, and hoped he would remember that he had promised double the value for a brave silken mantle.

“ It is well, Kate, that he who has been duped once should be assayed again ; but, as I have little leisure, speak out at once or make up your mind for the Tolbooth.”

While Ardourly was engaged with the mother, Kenneth was addressing himself to the son : “ What, Willie, will you not bid us

welcome? are you dead, in good earnest? Willie, my brave traveller, must the sun wake you through iron bars?—come, unroll yourself, and let us look at you—so then, poor fellow—poor fellow whether your errand has been good or bad, for your feet are well nigh flayed—speak to me just one word, and I'll give thee shoes for thy next journey. Not open your eyes? why, then, the Lord be with you poor Willie, and with your honest mother too, for she must speak for both—mean time we'll be bold to look round your den." Kenneth seized a dry stake which had been used to stir up the embers, and thrust it into them till it began to blaze. "Now, Kate," said he, as he drew forth his flaming and crackling flambeau, "we will see whether we can find a few of your secrets."

Kate rushed forward, and caught him by

the arm, " Hold, ye tithe part of a good man, would ye fire the lone woman's cot, and in the dead of night ?"

" Ay, Kate, and lock you inside, if you had your deserts." He stepped to the further end of the hut, and the old woman threw her back against the wall, and folded her arms with the consciousness that all subterfuge must be at an end. " Well, well," she muttered, " it has no been my fault—my young lady will see to it herself—but if the master comes back, there will be blood, and there's an end of it." Her prophecy was heard by neither Kenneth nor Ardourly—the former was extending his red brand over the sleeping Jessie, and the latter was kneeling by her side. " Merciful Heavens!" he exclaimed, " is this my Jessie? the daughter of chieftains—the young, the beautiful, reduced to this !"

Kenneth pressed his hand to his brows, and both were silent. The light fell strongly on the sleeper's eyelids, and awakened her to a vague perception of her returning sorrows. "My father," she faintly articulated, "is the hour arrived?" Ardourly was fearful of alarming her by an abrupt reply, and she raised her head. "I am dazzled with the light—but I feel it is the time;—good Kate, remove this plaid, and let me rise—the moments are precious." She was assisted to her feet, and all unconscious by whom, till she was clasped in the arms of her supporter.

"And is it thus I meet you, Jessie?" For some moments Jessie could answer only with the struggling sobs that burst tearless from the conflict of opposite emotions, and when her voice returned, it was to beseech him to leave her.

"Go, Henry, go—the chance which has

brought you here may be fatal—as Heaven wills it, my father is absent—Oh tempt him not to further crime, and me to distraction. Leave me ; for mercy leave me.”

“ Yes, Jessie, I will leave you, but first I have business with your father—he has sought my life ; he has blackened my reputation ; he may complete his vengeance still ; but I come to him with the feeling that he is Jessie’s father. Need I say more, to assure you that I mean him well ?”

“ Could I ever doubt you ? But here you must not remain. I will not say that I wished not to bid you adieu once more ; for, as I remember, our last was not of the kindest. You must think better of me in time to come. Kenneth, you will obey my last request ; assist me to entreat your master hence ere my father returns.”

“ Aye, my brave bardie,” said Kate, com-

ing forward, "for the master will be backed by an hundred good Hieland men, and that no many stone-casts off."

Jessie looked surprised and almost fearful to desire an explanation—

"An hundred, Kate! and why so many? I thought we wanted but enough to man one little craft for our escape."

"And you will have enough to man the ship that was lost in the fight—and I'm thinking it will be that very ship that they are meant for—for, look ye, my young lady, the whiles you lay sleeping there, I heard the master saying to himself, "It will be easy to cut her cables, for there are few to guard her, and, shattered as she is, she will serve our purpose;" and such like.

"If he attempts that enterprise," cried Ardourly, "he is lost—he must be killed or taken, for the ship is filled with soldiers;

and now I bethink me, the old woman must be right. There are boats upon the beach, which could be intended for nothing else. I will ride, Jessie, and stop him, ere it be too late."

"Must I bear fresh calamities? No, you must not go, though it be for the life of my father."

"Fear not for me—he could not harm the man who comes to save him;—besides, I have that to propose, which must even make him my friend. Nay, Jessie, it is in vain—I am determined." Jessie cast a look of entreaty at Kenneth, who knew at once her meaning, and supplicated permission to go in his master's stead." "It would be the brightest joy of his life," he said, "to have rendered his young lady one poor service at her need. If he performed it alone, it would be without danger; but if he followed

his master (which he was resolved to do, should he persist in going), there might be little hope for either." Kenneth's reasoning was good, but Ardourly was deaf to it. He would himself see Colraith. Jessie found that he was not to be persuaded, and was inspired by a last resource. "Go, then—I must, perforce, consent; but Jessie must be your protection—my father has more awe of his child's presence, than of a thousand men." Ardourly spoke but one word of admiration, and leading her from the hut placed her on horseback before him. The night was so cold and dreary, after the close atmosphere they had quitted, that even old Kate, as she stood blessing his Honour and her young Lady in the glowering space of her narrow door, might have been an object of envy. Jessie was pressed closer to the heart she leant upon, and the horse struck into a gallop, Kenneth forcing himself before

to try the uncertain ground. They judged the direction so well, that a short ride brought them to the edge of the cliff, beneath which Ardourly had observed the boats. "I do not see them," he exclaimed, springing from the saddle, and dismounting the terrified Jessie; we must descend through Willie's cave." Her light and lovely form was once more borne in his arms, till he gained the bottom of the aperture. All was dark and lonely. "By Heavens, Jessie, we are too late." They passed from the cave to the rocks on the outside, but the boats were gone; and the heavy fall of the waters, tumbling in the night-breeze, was unbroken by a human sound. "It is past, said Jessie; my father will never return!" While she yet spoke, and was following his supposed direction with her eye, she was suddenly and horridly assured of it by the long vivid lightning, and presently the faint report of

musquetry. The firing lasted, with increased rapidity, for ten minutes or more, and all was quiet. Jessie was insensible, and ere she was restored, a bark was driven violently against the rocks almost at her feet. Several men leaped from it, and escaped amongst the cliffs; but the first had landed in the strong grasp of Ardourly. "Speak, friend; how have you sped—and where is Gleneldie?"

"He was the first that boarded the ship—I know no more of him—we are followed by land and water."

"Away then, and save yourself." The fugitive was immediately out of sight, and Jessie was lifted into the deserted boat which glided back to the corvette as rapidly as it had fled. The young officer was the first to receive them; and to Jessie's faltering inquiry for her father, replied, that he was

indeed on board—" and I grieve, Miss Colraith, to prepare you for seeing him badly wounded—he has already desired you might be sent for."

On that same bed, on which he had, but a few days since, reposed with such daring confidence, lay the powerless and blood-stained figure of the outlawed Scot. A few soldiers who had endeavoured to bind up his wound, but whom the prisoner had motioned to desist, stood round him in silence to mark, by the wan light of a single taper, the last pale hue steal over his dying countenance. He saw them not, for his eyes were closed, and his thoughts were with his daughter; nor did he evince any perception of what was passing till the rest retired to leave his remaining moments to her undisturbed. She sank by his side, and her presence was announced only by the hysteric trembling of her

breath. His dark eye slowly unclosed—its fierceness was gone, and its whole expression was mellowed down to the tone of his younger days. “My child,” he said, “you are come to witness a scene from which you must return a solitary orphan—you will be the happier—my life has been a misery to us both, and I thank the shot which brings it to a close. Weep not, my girl ; it might have been worse—what would you have suffered, had I been doomed to the death which awaits my poor deluded victims, whose chains are ringing such sharp reproaches in my ears?”

Jessie attempted to speak, but the words died upon her lips—and after an interval of pain, and more painful recollection, Colraith resumed—

“Many things come over me, and press heavily. I was hardly used, but my ven-

geance was wreaked upon the innocent. I was insane, and deemed that all men leagued against me. Invercraig has no more to fear. I will not ask him to forgive—perhaps, his heart melts not with the softness of a dying man ; but he will pardon, when he lies as I lie now ;—and your old guardian too—your second father—he who took you from your infancy—Oh, my head is burning !—There is another—another whose blood I have escaped by accident—he was the son of one to whom I bore a groundless enmity—a young boy, whose only crime was loving my orphan-girl—one, who would have yielded up his all to her, and departed to sicken over blighted hopes, and a blasted name.”

“ And would have saved you, my father, now my father’s self, had not Heaven doomed it otherwise.”

Colraith paused long, and his breath came

shorter. "Send, send, Jessie, while it is left me to atone. That boy—let me not die till I have seen him." Jessie tottered to the door, and returned with Ardourly.

"Come near me," said the fast declining exile, "I cannot harm you now—on the other side; so, now I reach you. You have an honest brow, and will faithfully protect a charge I leave you?" "As my soul hopes for mercy." Jessie dropped upon her knees, and faintly exclaimed, "My father, my father too may hope."

"Rise, my Jessie—your hand—and your's—nay, I cannot see, for my eyes are unsteady—let me be remembered by the last act of my life—be all the rest forgotten." He placed their hands within each other, and bowed his forehead upon them—he bowed it lower and lower, till it rested upon them, and he never raised it again.

FINIS.

**LONDON:
PRINTED BY W. CLOWES,
Northumberland-court.**





